

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

ROYAL DECREE: A Royal Decree has been issued approving the new regulations on vehicle plates. The regulations provide for changing the numbers of vehicles so that they will consist of four digits and two letters. This will be also accompanied by giving plates distinguished colours. (Petra)

DUDIN RECEIVES CHINESE ENVOY: Labour Minister Marwan Dudin Wednesday received Chinese Ambassador in Amman Zhang Zhen at the conclusion of his tour of duty. (Petra)

KHASAWNEH MEETS ENVOYS: Information Minister Dr. Hani Khasawneh Wednesday received separately Japanese Ambassador in Amman Makoto Watanabe and Chinese Ambassador Zhang Zhen. (Petra)

COOPERATION WITH QATAR: Greater Amman Municipality Mayor Abdul Ra'uf Al Rawabdeh Wednesday discussed cooperation with Qatari Ambassador in Amman Mubarak Naser Al Kuwari. (Petra)

AMIN CHAIRS COUNCIL MEETINGS: Amman Governor Mohammad Ali Al Amin Wednesday chaired a meeting for the city's executive council to discuss projects that will be implemented in the Amman region during 1989. The meeting, which was attended by council members and provincial governors also discussed the past years' achievements and those included in the current five-year development plan. According to Amin a total of JD 2 million will be invested in industrial schemes in the Amman region during 1989. (Petra)

S. YEMENI MINISTER TO ARRIVE: South Yemen's Foreign Minister Dr. Abdul Aziz Al Dali is due here Saturday on a four-day visit to Jordan. Dali is expected to hold talks with Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem and senior officials at the Foreign Ministry. (Petra)

SOVIET ANNIVERSARY MARKED: President of the Jordanian-Soviet Friendship Society Bahjat Talhouni Wednesday attended a reception on the 71st anniversary of the founding of the Red Army and Red Navy. Members of the diplomatic corps and society members attended the reception. (Petra)

PEOPLE'S ARMY: A new batch of People's Army recruits Wednesday graduated in Deir Abu Sa'id. Speeches were delivered underlining the importance of military training. (Petra)

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE GROUP: University of Jordan President Dr. Abdul Salam Al Majali Wednesday received the London Royal Shakespeare Group currently on a visit to Jordan. The group presented a performance of Romeo and Juliet at the university Wednesday. (J.T.)

NHF BEGINS AEROBICS COURSE: The Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) Wednesday opened a two-week aerobics training course for children. A total of 23 children are taking part in the course held in Aqaba. (Petra)

U.S. TAXPAYER ASSISTANCE TOUR: A representative of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will visit Amman again this year to give guidance and assistance to U.S. taxpayers in filing their 1988 tax returns. The IRS representative will be in Amman beginning Thursday, Feb. 23 through Thursday, March 2. (J.T.)

'LIFE ON A SWEDISH ICEBREAKER': The Swedish film institute and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs have released a film about the activities of a Swedish icebreaker and the environment surrounding it. The film "Life on a Swedish Icebreaker" is part of a multi-media package which also includes a photo exhibition, a radio programme. The package including the film will be presented at the Royal Cultural Centre on Feb. 25 at 7:00 p.m., and again at the French Cultural Centre from Feb. 28 through March 9. Both presentations will be held under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Majda Raad. (J.T.)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXHIBITION: A mobile archaeological exhibition on Tel Abu Hamid agricultural settlement in the Jordan Valley, which dates back to the fourth millennium B.C., is being held at the University of Jordan. The nine-day exhibition, which was previously shown in Irbid and Amman, includes photographs, drawings and maps showing the way of life at the ancient site, as well as artefacts excavated by archaeologists from Yarmouk University's Institute of Anthropology and Archaeology, the Paris-based Arab National Centre for Scientific Research and the French Archaeological Institute in the Near East. (Petra)

DRUG TRAFFICKERS JAILED: The military court has sentenced Hani Mohammad Shamekh Al Shboul to eight years imprisonment and the payment of JD 800 for acquisition of hashish. The court also sentenced Faizal Mubarak Abu Zreiq to four years imprisonment and the payment of JD 400 on the same charge. The court sentenced Abdul Nasser Mohammad Adnan Agha to eight years imprisonment and the payment of JD 3,500 for possession of heroin. The military governor approved all sentences. (Petra)

TRAFFIC AWARENESS: Chairman of the National Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents Mohammad Al Dabbas Wednesday chaired a symposium attended by a number of experts on means to promote traffic awareness and reduce road accidents. (Petra)

SOUTH MAZAR PROJECTS: South Mazar District Governor Hayya Al Rawashdeh Wednesday said that the amount spent on development and service projects in South Mazar District in 1988 totalled JD 1,403,775. He added that a further JD 574,458 are being spent on educational projects. (Petra)

KOREAN ENVOY AT YARMOUK: South Korean Ambassador to Jordan Tae-Jin Park visited Yarmouk University Wednesday and met with its President Mohammad Hamdan and his aides to discuss teaching Arabic to Korean students in the university. The university's languages centre provides Arabic language programmes to non-Arabs of all nationalities. The ambassador who was accompanied by embassy officials toured the campus and inspected the library and other facilities. (Petra)

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- * An art exhibition by Paul and Emanuel Guiragoussian at Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation.
- * The Arab Contemporary Artists exhibition at Al Wasiti Gallery.
- * An exhibition of models of the Jordanian plastic art, in which 22 Jordanian artists are participating, at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- * An exhibition entitled "The Tuebingen Atlas of the Middle East" at the Department of Geography, the University of Jordan.
- * An exhibition of paintings of Jordan by Luz Marina Robertson at the Petra Bank Gallery.
- * An exhibition of Islamic art and calligraphy by Jordanian artist Mohammad Mubaidin at the Housing Bank Gallery.
- * An exhibition on Aila, an Islamic medieval city, port of Palestine and the storehouse of Hijaz on the China Sea, at the Yarmouk University.
- * An exhibition of Arabic books which includes 15,000 books on science, education and culture at the Karak Community College.
- * An art exhibition by Jordanian artist 'Adnan Yahya at Alia Art Gallery.
- * An exhibition of paintings by French artist Francoise Petrovitch at the French Cultural Centre.
- * An archaeological mobile exhibition on Tel Abu Hamid agricultural settlement at the University of Jordan.

FILMS

- * A feature film entitled "Kramer vs. Kramer" at the American Centre — 7:00 p.m.
- * An Italian film entitled "Fantozzi" at Haya Arts Centre — 7:30 p.m.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Wednesday sees off the 20th relief mission to Sudan (Petra photo)

UNESCO envoy voices concern over education in occupied lands

AMMAN (Petra) — A special envoy from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Director General Wednesday voiced the organisation's deep concern over the deterioration of the educational and cultural situation in the occupied Arab territories.

Father Edward Bone, who has spent three days in Jordan as part of his fact finding tour of the Middle East, said that at least 475,000 Arab students in the occupied lands are now being deprived of education.

"This is a very grave matter and requires a speedy solution since education is a basic and essential requirement for all human beings," Bone said.

Bone, who is due to go to Damascus and Cairo after his visit to Jordan, said that this was his second mission to the region entrusted by UNESCO to find out about the educational situation in the occupied regions.

Bone said he visited Jordan in 1987 to discuss about the universities in the occupied territories and their potential in providing high level education to the local population.

But his current tour is more extensive and his report to the UNESCO headquarters will cover the situation at various educational institutions in the Palestinian lands.

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The New York-based United Nations Technical Assistance Programme is to supervise the implementation of the project in the coming three years.

The agreement was signed by Minister of Planning Taher Ka-

naan and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Representative in Jordan Ali Atiq in the presence of ministry and UNDP officials.

In the past year, UNDP signed four agreements with the Ministry of Planning, providing assistance to establish a laboratory for genetic research at the University of Jordan's faculty of medicine, technical assistance to help diversify and develop exports and help promote the Vocational Training Corporation's programmes.

Jordan to get over \$900,000 U.N. aid to promote rural industries

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan is to receive more than \$900,000 in technical aid from the United Nations over the coming three years to help it promote rural industries and improve its economic planning programmes, according to an agreement signed in Amman Wednesday.

Under the agreement, a project for developing small industries in the rural regions of the Kingdom undertaken by the Cities and Villages Development Bank (CVDB), is designed to create jobs in rural districts and stem the movement of people from those regions to urban areas of the country.

The project, which is to be financed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), in the coming three years, is expected to cost \$409,424, according to the provisions of the agree-

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Committee discusses adopted energy conference resolutions

AMMAN (Petra) — A follow up committee formed by the Arab Energy Conference held a meeting here Wednesday to discuss the implementation of resolutions adopted at a Baghdad meeting held last March.

The talks also focused on a committee meeting which is due to be held in Amman in 1992 and the subjects that will be discussed.

Questions such as the committee's budget for 1989 and activities during this year were also reviewed at the meeting.

Also discussed were challenges to the Arab World in terms of energy production, alternative

energy resources and the impact of energy on Arab economy.

Visiting Iraqi Minister of Petroleum Isam Jalabi who arrived here Tuesday attended the meeting in his capacity as the Arab energy conference chairman.

Attending the meeting, which was held at the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, were Minister of Energy Hisham Al Khatib, Abdul Latif Al Hamad, board chairman of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, and Mr. Abdul Aziz Al Watani, secretary general of the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC).

Her painting of 'Jerash' is a very interesting composition in which she takes advantage of the verticality and the repetitiveness of the columns. She comes up with a diagonal walkway that runs up from one mass of verticality to another. Simple but impressive in its originality.

Another interesting diagonal composition portrays Amman. The descending skyline crowns a hill that is covered with a dense mass of houses, interacting in medium pastel tones, subdued enough to convey a calm rather than a crowded atmosphere.

On the other hand, in her painting of Salt, houses are outlined volumes with tinted patches of light that not only form a musical variety of rhythms, but maintain the three-dimensional quality of the mountain itself. So much for city scenes.

Her outdoor scenes differ in mood and in rendering. In her "Poppies" she reminds us of the "surprise element" that one cannot fail to experience when he suddenly comes across green pastures covered with blazing red poppies. The experience leaves you breathless, and so does her canvas, covered with titillating intense red strokes in the midst of intense green grass. It is important to take into consideration that placing two contrasting colours side by side enhances the intensity of one and the other. The impact of this work is amazing, yet not too striking, because of the fragility of the scattering of the flowers which seems so natural.

The flaming tree is another boisterous, movement painting of a large tree with fiery tufts of autumn leaves. Intense movement is suggested by the thrust of bare branches and the wild billowing tufts of foliage.

Luz Marina portrays a different mood in other landscapes such as those of the Jordan Valley.

Regent reviews Jordan's relief operations

20th relief mission leaves for Sudan

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — Jordan Wednesday dispatched yet another mission to Sudan carrying medical equipment, medicine and other supplies for the Jordanian relief mission stationed in the Arab African country to provide assistance to the local population.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, saw off the mission, the 20th of its kind, which comprises 14 physicians and technicians who will relieve the 19th mission sent earlier to provide essential medical services.

According to Dr. Abdul Salam Al Abbadi, rapporteur of the Jordanian National Committee for Solidarity with the Sudanese People, parallel with the work of the medical missions, Jordan has dispatched a technical team to plan and carry out water and electricity projects at the city of Kass benefiting at least 12,000 citizens who had been deprived of these essential services before.

Abbadi, who was at the airport to see the mission off, said that the water project entails drilling 10 artesian wells, replacing old pipes with a new network of 40 kilometres in length, building eight water towers each with a 800-cubic-metre capacity and installing a water purification system.

As to the electricity project, it entails installing a power station with a total generating power of 800 kilovolt ampere, laying electric cables, fixing 325 power posts, supplying electric power to the water wells and distributing power supplies to various parts of the town. Abbadi said the projects are expected to be completed in six months time.

He said: "The Jordanian Hashemite Technical Mission comprises 16 engineers and technicians from the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, the Royal Engineering Corp., the Jordan Electricity Authority, the Water Authority of Jordan and the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre."

This team is replaced by new technicians every two months, according to Abbadi.

He said the cost of supplying equipment and carrying out the

projects are covered by the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank but the designs, tender documents, the supervision and implementation of the projects were carried out by Jordan through the Royal Engineering Corp in conjunction with the Jordanian National Committee for Solidarity with Sudan.

On the eve of the mission's departure, Prince Hassan chaired a meeting at the Royal Court and heard a briefing on the Jordanian missions' operations in Sudan, especially on the power and water supply schemes in Kass.

Prince Hassan also heard a briefing on the medical missions and the different institutions which offered contributions towards this humanitarian task.

The meeting at the Royal Court was attended by the Ministry of Health's secretary general and officials from the ministries of Health, Public Works and Housing, the water and electricity authorities and the Royal Engineering Corp.

Present at the airport with Prince Hassan to see the mission off, was also Health Minister Zuhair Malhas and Sudan's Ambassador to Jordan, Mahjoub Radwan.

Egypt's youth minister arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — An Egyptian delegation representing the Higher Council of Youth arrived here Wednesday on an official visit to Jordan at the invitation of Minister of Youth Awad Khleifat.

The delegation is led by Dr. Abdul Ahad Jamaluddin, minister of youth, who upon arrival paid tribute to the Jordanian-Egyptian cultural relations.

The four-member delegation, which was welcomed by Khleifat and Ministry of Youth officials,

CAEU secretary general leaves for Rabat talks

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — Secretary General of the Amman-based Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU), Mr. Ibrahim Ibrahim left for Rabat Wednesday to take part in the 43rd meeting of the Arab Economic and Social Council meeting due to open there Friday.

During his stay in the Moroccan capital Ibrahim is scheduled to meet with Arab ministers of economy attending the session to discuss the council's cooperation with their respective countries.

According to a CAEU official here, Ibrahim plans to urge these countries to honour their financial commitments to the CAEU's annual budget.

In a pre-departure statement,

Ibrahim paid tribute to Jordan and Syria who, he said, were among the foremost Arab states that have already paid up their commitments and added that Iraq has made arrangements for transferring \$250,000 to the CAEU.

Jordan is represented at the Rabat meeting by a delegation to be headed by Minister of Industry and Trade Hamdi Tabbaa. It is also taking part in preparations for the coming meeting through a technical committee which opened meetings Wednesday.

Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Mohammad Saqqaf and a team of Jordanian officials are representing Jordan in the preparatory committee meetings.

Jordanian-Syrian maritime firm makes less profit in '88

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — The joint Jordanian-Syrian Maritime Company last year realised a profit of 20 million Syrian pounds down from 22 million for operations carried out by its two cargo vessels in the previous year, according to Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Khaled Al Haj Hassan.

The minister, who made the statement upon returning home from meetings in Damascus where operations by the joint land transport and maritime companies general assemblies were discussed, said that the Jordanian and Syrian sides have decided to distribute the 1987 profits equally between the two countries.

The two sides discussed purchasing a third cargo vessel to be

put in service alongside Yarmouk and Barada, in cooperation with the Arab United Insurance Company, Haj Hassan noted.

He said that the land transport company general assembly reviewed the company's operations in the past year and charted programmes for 1989, in implementation of directives by the joint Jordanian-Syrian Higher Committee.

Haj Hassan held side talks with Syrian Prime Minister Mahmoud Al Zou'bi and Syrian Minister of Transport Youssef Ahmad designed to promote transport between the two countries.

At the conclusion of the meetings in Damascus, Haj Hassan and Ahmad signed the minutes of the two assemblies meetings and

visited a service station near Aleppo, which provides maintenance work for railway locomotives in Syria.

In a separate development Jordan's Ambassador to Syria Nayef Al Hadid met in Damascus Wednesday with Syrian Minister of Higher Education Kamal Sharaf to discuss cooperation in higher education.

The ambassador conveyed to Sharaf an invitation from Minister of Higher Education Nassereddin Al Assad to visit Jordan.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Sharaf will be making the visit in the first half of the coming month at the head of an official delegation of the Syrian Ministry of Higher Education and Syrian universities.

Portraying a poetic country

By Nelly Lama
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Petra Bank is the venue of an art exhibition by the Colombian-born artist Luz Marina Robertson.

In the past, Luz Marina had gone to Paris to study law. Like many others who fall for the city's charm, she went through "the art experience," the symptom of which is the deep awareness of the importance, the beauty and the meaning of art. It is a phenomenon that does not wear off easily. She got so involved in the Paris art scene that guardians in museums found her familiar and greeted her.

Back in Columbia, she studied drawing and went on to a solitary study of colour.

A few years later, in Indonesia, she was part of the "Group Sembilan," a group of nine artists, 7 expatriates and two Indonesians, who led a wholly artistic existence. She held three exhibitions within a period of two years. On to the United States where she painted for one and a half years and finally to Jordan where she arrived over four years ago.

"Having come from Columbia, a tropical country where everything is green, I find the Jordanian landscape fascinating, dramatic, even poetic," she says. It was her visits to the many areas of Jordan that incited her to paint. She covered Salt, Amman, Petra, Wadi Musa, Jerash etc. in her own particular style. She has

a sharp eye for subjects that lend themselves to a simple composition. Wadi Musa, Shomari and other desert areas do tend to form simple, clean cut landscapes, with plenty of open space, interrupted only by the odd shrub or hillock.

It is in the portrayal of these trivial items that she excels, creating perspective by enhancing texture in the foreground. A shrub has tumultuous "tentacles" while others further up seem less shaggy as they recede.

ART REVIEW

In portraying Badia in Petra, she has a rather original approach (this is hard enough to achieve since Petra has been so inexhaustibly portrayed). She depicts the Nabatean carved rock through a chiaro-scuro of linear brushstrokes, both vertical and horizontal, forming tumultuous rhythms which are as true to her own joyful personality as they are to the scene. It is known that an artist puts a lot of himself in his work.

Her painting of 'Jerash' is a very interesting composition in which she takes advantage of the verticality and the repetitiveness of the columns. She comes up with a diagonal walkway that runs up from one mass of verticality to another. Simple but impressive in its originality.

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hill that is covered with a dense mass of houses, interacting in medium pastel tones, subdued enough to convey a calm rather than a crowded atmosphere.

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River Jordan: one of the paintings by Luz Marina Robertson

Physical reality seems clothed in mystic atmospheric garb. Slightly surrealistic because of the haze that envelops the distant mountains. "Al Sharrah," for example, has a moonbeam piercing through the mist, beneath it patches of impasto (raised paint) lay as a reminder of the physical world, reminiscent of the symbolism of the beginning of the century.

Water seems to convey to her a need for abstraction, for in two of her paintings River Jordan and Desert Springs, she depends on abstract patches of colour to portray water, shrubs and blooms. In the first painting, the curvilinear flow of the water is depicted clearly, showing the banks of the river. In the second painting, a variety of floating coloured brushstrokes leaves you guessing.

As for her still-lives, being South American, one could expect Luz Marina to be familiar ad

infinite with pottery jars, and static as they might seem to be, she manages to give them vibrant life through what she might call "tricks of the trade." In one painting it is their staggered placement against a dark background; in another, it is coloured patches and a "waterfall" of shapes and colours in the background that contribute to the vivacity of such a static subject. Here too, her vibrant personality shows through.

Luz Marina also exhibits large pencil sketches of people with different ethnic backgrounds, beaded with silver jewellery. She loves Bedouin jewellery and does her own designs with antique silver and Hebrew glass beads which her friends find fascinating.

To see her exhibit, one finds truth in her exclamation, "I love Jordan so much that I can't help painting it."

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

جوردان تايمز يومية عربية سياسية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times Advertising Department.

Wrong message from U.S.

IN REACTION to the Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's on-going working tour of some Arab countries in the Middle East, U.S. President George Bush had some interesting things to say, something that casts some doubt on the ability of the two superpowers to cooperate together in good faith to effectively and permanently settle the Arab-Israeli conflict.

To begin with the U.S. has been sending signals to the parties involved in the Middle East conflict that it wishes to go slow on its involvement in the peace process. That in itself was not comforting to the Arab side including of course the Palestinians who are in the midst of a bitter struggle against savage Israeli occupation.

As the Arab-Israeli conflict is more than four decades old, the Arab parties would have thought that the basics about their conflict with Israel are only too well known if not memorised by now. To signal now, after so many agonising years and in the wake of the on-going Palestinian uprising, that time is not of the essence and that the U.S. can afford the luxury of watching the blood-letting that goes on between the Arabs and Israelis without really doing something about it is not the kind of message the Arabs have been waiting for.

The Middle Eastern countries have been counting on the U.S. for so long to exercise its role as a superpower and come to the rescue of legitimate causes instead of staying as a spectator to the sufferings and killings that go on in the occupied territories. And then when the Soviet foreign minister makes a trip to the Arab capitals in the Middle East in a genuine attempt to lend a hand in order to get the process of peace going, the Washington's main concern becomes how to make sure that the Soviet role, present and future, in the Arab-Israeli conflict remains "limited" for all times, as if such an objective in itself is all that concerns the parties to the conflict. Thus, while the U.S. calls for a "prudent", "slow" and "limited" role for itself, at the same time it seeks a limited role for the Soviet Union. What the U.S. is in effect telling the peoples and governments of the Middle East is that they are on their own to resolve their conflicts and that the superpowers' efforts to get actively involved in the search for peace in the area would be frustrated as a matter of deliberate policy. In other words the U.S. does not want to be "stampeded" into action in the Middle East and at the same time does not want Moscow to do anything about it either. If one adds to the new jargon employed by the U.S. to describe its future course in the Middle East the fact that the Soviet foreign minister was unable to budge his Israeli counterpart from his government's stone-walled position on the idea of convening an international peace conference, and that the PLO is exasperated over Washington's stalling over its talks with Palestinian representatives in Tunis, the total picture emerging from all these developments is anything but encouraging. Someone has got to move and if the peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict has any chance of getting anywhere, the U.S. has to do the moving and fast.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

IN its editorial Wednesday, Al Ra'i Arabic daily discusses the position of the Israeli government leaders vis-a-vis the on-going uprising in the occupied Arab territories. The paper referred to Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin's statement in the Knesset in which he admitted that Israel is incapable of putting down the uprising and urged the Israelis who could not bear the disturbances to pull out from Arab areas where they are living at present. This statement, the paper noted, is a total contradiction to Rabin's statement 14 months ago when the uprising was young and when he said that it would be put down in a fortnight. Rabin like Barlev, another cabinet minister, is openly telling the Israeli people that the government with all its troops and arms has now failed to carry out its promises of crushing the uprising, but unfortunately these statements are falling on the Israeli government's deaf ears, the paper noted. All this, said the paper, is a clear indication that the Palestinian people's revolt is going ahead and is taking a sound course. It clearly shows that the Israeli terrorist actions can never bear fruit or achieve an end, the paper added. The Israeli minister and people should realise, the paper concluded, that only through giving the Palestinians their rights and through an international conference can real peace prevail.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily is critical of the United States which, he says, is trying to exploit the situation in Afghanistan following the Soviet pullout from that country. Rakan Al Majali, who is also the paper's editor, says that Washington wants to take revenge on Moscow and make up for its ignominious retreat from Vietnam where it had hoped that a pro-American government would be instituted and where it had hoped to crush the rebels. The writer says that the Soviet Union is clearly oriented towards peace, and for this reason, it is now calling on all peace-loving nations to help re-establish peace in Afghanistan; and for this reason it has sent its foreign minister to the Middle East to help bring about peace in our region too. But, the writer says, in contrast the United States is taking a negative stand towards these two issues, despite the Soviet positive stand and despite the PLO's latest overtures and its clear orientation to attain peace in the region.

Al Dastour daily carried an editorial Wednesday that tackles Tuesday's honouring of municipalities that offered the best services to the public in the past two years. The paper referred to Prince Hassan's speech at the presentation ceremony in which he referred to the challenges which Jordan had faced over the past three decades and were overcome through diligence and serious efforts on the part of the Jordanian people. The paper echoed Prince Hassan's call on the municipal authorities in Jordan to increase their efforts and to provide better services and carry out more well-planned projects. The paper recalled Prince Hassan's call on these municipalities to help Jordan to transform from a consumer into productive society and to promote cooperation with Arab towns and cities in municipal affairs.



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Screaming in Shamir's face

By Ami Dar

ONE OF the saddest experiences for someone returning from a stint of army service in the territories is to see how many friends and relatives simply don't want to hear what you saw or did there. At first you see the blank look in the eyes, you understand that your story isn't sinking in, and you think that maybe there's something wrong with the way you're telling it.

It takes a while to realise that the blank look appeared the moment you began your story. It is not from a lack of sympathy or understanding on the listener's part; it is simply an obstinate refusal to know — a generalised refusal that is possibly the worst casualty the intifada has inflicted on this country.

On January 17, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir came to Nablus for a short visit. After taking a look at the city from a nearby hilltop and being briefed by his generals, he dropped in for a friendly chat with soldiers serving in the area. The most surprising thing about that meeting between the prime minister and the paratroopers was that Shamir seemed genuinely surprised by what he heard there. Stark reality had suddenly struck him in the face, and the anger and impatience that could be seen in his eyes and hands were as much a result of the words he was hearing as of the fact that for several long minutes he was forced to listen and to know.

During the previous evening, when we were told that the prime minister would be arriving the following morning and that he would probably be coming to see us, a few men had joked about what they would tell him should the opportunity arise. Next day we were given that opportunity, and some of us got up and spoke.

There were many things I would have liked to tell Shamir on that sunny morning in Nablus. I would have liked to tell him about my democratic values and what compulsory military service in an occupied city can do to them; I would have liked to speak of how the Palestinians are getting stronger day by day, morally and spiritually, while we are getting weaker, and I would have liked to scream and cry about how our army is being sullied, corroded and undermined by the impossible task the government has given it.

In the end, having only a couple of minutes at my disposal, I only said that as far as I could see, there was no way that he and the men around him could know what is really happening in the field, when even battalion and company commanders have no way of knowing exactly what soldiers are doing when they are out on patrol.

Now, however, I can sit at home with time to spare and fantasise for a while on what I would have told Shamir, had I been granted a few minutes more of his time.

To begin with, I would have explained that when I said he and his men don't know what is actually going on in the area, I had two things in mind. The first is that no one can really know what the whole thing is about until he personally goes there, puts a helmet and a visor on his head and goes out to see and feel the place for himself.

You can read the papers and watch the news on television, and you can even do your best to imagine what the soldiers and the Arabs are going through. But until you see a three-year-old girl crying hysterically simply because she sees you approaching down the street; until you see a grown man literally shaking all over just because you've asked him for his ID card; in short, until you see and smell and hear the fear and the hate and the anger, it all remains abstract and distant and not too urgent.

The second thing I had in mind

was that the daily reality of the occupation is immensely complex, being made up of tens of thousands of individual encounters between thousands of soldiers and thousands of Arabs at checkpoints, in demonstrations, and on the streets and alleys of villages, towns and refugee camps.

The exceptional results of each day's encounters are known to us all: we read the statistics of dead and wounded in the press. But these are only the newsworthy exceptions; the fuller picture, which never reaches any of us, should look as follows: two Arabs dead, five wounded, 154 kicked, 256 slapped and 97 humiliated, for example.

Having a citizen's army means that all kinds of men reach the territories: far too many of them arrive there with problems and frustrations which they find all too easy to vent on the local population. Naturally, these are the Rambos return to their base, they see no reason for reporting their actions to their commanding officers.

"... I would have liked to speak of how the Palestinians are getting stronger day by day, morally and spiritually, while we are getting weaker, and I would have liked to scream and cry about how our army is being sullied, corroded and undermined by the impossible task the government has given it."

Another issue I would have liked to raise with Shamir was the use and abuse of plastic bullets against young stone-throwers.

The orders we were given in this regard were very explicit: every stone-throwing incident must end either in an arrest or a stone-thrower with a plastic bullet in his leg. At the same time, we must do our best not to kill anyone: the army has finally understood that every time an Arab is killed, it is they and not we who have scored another point.

Yet carrying out these orders is not as easy as it may sound. Catching children and teenagers who are playing against you in their home court, can be almost impossible, and hitting a running youth at 70 metres with a plastic bullet under the knee (those are the regulations) is extremely difficult.

The plastic bullet is much lighter than its steel-coated cousin and therefore, although it is not as lethal, it is far less accurate. Nevertheless, in spite of these difficulties, during the 20 days we spent in the casbah in Nablus, we did exactly as we were told: we killed no one and we hit 17 young Arabs in the leg with plastic bullets.

These 17 kids, and the men who shot them, deserve a few comments. The first is to repeat that all these youths and children were hit in the leg, most of them under the knee. To put this accomplishment in perspective, it should be noted that during the past few months, more than 40 people have been killed by plastic

bullets, while hundreds more have been seriously injured.

Had only three or four people been hit by our unit, one could contend that our accuracy was a stroke of luck. Seventeen wounded, however, without even one serious injury, cannot be attributed to mere chance, and the army should check case by case, with file detectors if necessary: why is it that so many people have been killed by plastic bullets? Is it because our troops don't know how to shoot — or is it that some of them can shoot all too well?

In addition, the politicians at the top should know that today there is a blatant contradiction between the oral order given in the field — to shoot or arrest every possible stone-thrower — and the written order to shoot in the air before you fire a plastic bullet.

The trouble here is that by shooting in the air before you shoot plastic, you can make things difficult for yourself. In order to hit these kids, you must stalk and ambush them, and the shot in the air, which may scare them away (as was intended by those who wrote the order), can become an irrelevant nuisance.

This contradiction is often resolved by having someone shoot in the air while someone else fires a plastic bullet; the main thing is to be legally "covered."

The third and final comment is that none of these 17 youths was shot in self-defence: they were all shot as a punishment for throwing stones. The moral implications of this fact are there for everyone to reflect on: we did our best to obey orders, we kept the city quiet, but in the process we intentionally wounded 17 people who never really endangered us.

One of the sentences that was repeated over and over again in the meeting with Shamir was that while we are getting weaker, the Palestinians are getting stronger. I think this contention is especially important for convincing the rational rightists among us that the time has come to leave the territories.

In this country, there are two kinds of people who define themselves as right-wingers. There are those for whom the Land of Israel is sacred and must be kept under Jewish control at any cost, and there are those for whom holding on to the West Bank is simply a matter of security.

With the former group there is nothing to talk about: with the latter, on the other hand, one can have a discussion on their own terms. These are people who understand that Israel's security rests primarily on its military force. Should the army be considerably weakened, "strategic depth" and "natural borders" would not count for much.

That the army, and especially the reservists, have not been training as much as they should (my unit served for almost two months this year, out of which only three days were devoted to training) is common knowledge, as is the fact that the army doesn't have enough money for its needs.

In spite of this, the armed forces are now forced to spend millions of dollars on a lost war instead of investing in new weapons systems. Unfortunately, this is not all. Money, material and training are undoubtedly important, but if an army marches on its stomach, it stands on its discipline and morale. And today the army's discipline is being attacked on two fronts.

On the one hand, too many young recruits are left for long days with too much freedom and too much power in their hands, without being supervised by their commanders. Anyone who has served in an army will understand how potentially catastrophic this can be: orders to young soldiers are almost meaningless if they are not backed by the observant eye of noncoms and officers.

On the other hand, too many soldiers have seen their own offi-

cers openly disregarding or even disobeying the army's laws. In regular fighting units, where officers are often regarded as semi-divine, nothing more destructive could be imagined.

The end result of this overall situation is that the best and the brightest young officers now serving in the army will gradually opt out of a career in a demoralised, inefficient and undisciplined force. Who wants a career with an army that has been involved in petty civil wars for four out of the last five and a half years?

The last point I would have raised with the prime minister, in the hope that he could have done something about it, is a mere trifle compared to all the above. Every day, several observation points are set up on various roofs in and around Nablus. The soldiers who man these posts usually stay put from sunrise to sunset. They eat there, they watch the city awake and trade and work, and sooner or later they also have to defecate. But there are no toilets on the roofs of these buildings, and so the soldiers have to make do with landings, rooftops and abandoned rooms. The results can be appalling.

On one building where I was stationed for a few days, large areas of the roof were covered with a coat of excrement and used toilet paper. Unfortunately, the building's tenants have to hang their laundry on that roof. Believe me, Prime Minister, it's not a pretty sight to see a middle-aged woman from a good family making her way through piles of feces to reach her laundry.

When we asked the brigade commander in charge of Samaria if anything could be done about this problem, we received the usual answer: "No money for chemical toilets."

The trouble, of course, is that if the woman in question had been Jewish instead of Arab, no one would even have thought of using her roof as a public lavatory — The Jerusalem Post.

By Robert Mabro

The writer is director of the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies

IN MARCH 1982 OPEC began its recourse to production programming in an attempt to regulate the world petroleum market. An examination of production patterns shows that, in 1982-83, Saudi Arabia consistently under-produced even when it emphatically asserted that it renounced its role as swing producer, and that the UAE consistently over-produced.

OPEC's production programmes display regular features which suggest that two main criteria — oil reserves and population size — are implicitly taken into account in the allocation of quotas. The main exceptions relate to Iran and Iraq, because of political difficulties arising from the Gulf war. Countries with limited production capacity were allocated production quotas close to full capacity, and countries with large reserves, quotas representing a fraction of their capacities. This seems to recognise that the time preference of small reserves countries is biased in favour of present revenues and that of large reserves countries in favour of the future. The implications of this observed pattern are many. Since the bulk of surplus capacity is with the large reserves countries in the Gulf, incremental demand for OPEC oil is necessarily supplied by these countries. The complaints of other OPEC members that the Gulf countries appropriate a large proportion of the growth in oil demand do not make much sense. Similarly, the complaints of some Gulf countries about their sacrifices in support of OPEC's common good should be qualified with the observation that they will soon be in a position to appropriate vir-

OPEN FORUM

Satanic menace

THE recently published "Satanic Verses" by the British writer Salman Rushdie has so far managed to bring its author fame, wealth and a death warrant. As a writer, Rushdie enjoyed moderate success which is fuelled by his rebellious attitude and liberal approach towards his own Asian social and cultural roots. Recently, he staged the biggest coup of his professional career by the publication of his work "The Satanic Verses," a reference to verses which it is claimed were removed from the Koran because it was believed that these verses were inspired by the devil. The book views the Prophet Mohammed in a manner which most followers of the Islamic faith would find both defamatory and blasphemous.

The book which was for sale on the shelves of the famous British bookstore (W.H. Smith) attracted waves of angry protest from British Muslim leaders who called for the boycott of both the book and the bookstore. Fearing the financial loss which this self-imposed boycott could inflict on the store and realising that the book was not selling as well as was expected, the bookstore withdrew the book as a sign of goodwill on its part towards the Muslim community. Many observers believed this action by the bookstore settled the matter for good. However, some elements in the British media, notably the tabloids of gutter journalism, interpreted the move by W.H. Smith to withdraw the book as a submission to pressure and blackmail from the Muslim lobby. Eventually the store reversed its earlier decision and the book was again on sale in high streets all over the country. This, in turn, outraged the Muslim community and gave impetus to a new campaign to have the book banned. This renewed campaign took on an international dimension with pictures on British television showing angry protesters burning copies of the book (which were incidentally bought from the very bookstore thus helping to raise the sale figures for the book). Wild demonstrations and protests erupted in Islamabad in which a number of protesters perished in the violence which ensued. People were called on to the streets of Tehran and other Iranian cities to protest the book and call for the heads of its author and publisher which Khomeini has authorised personally. Meanwhile the saga continues to generate more pointless publicity and increased revenue from the sale of the book. The author is currently under police protection for fear of an attempt on his life.

A careful analysis of the events of the past few months in relation to this affair is bound to shed some light on the following main points:

1. The amateurish manner in which the opposition campaign has handled the whole affair. For although every devout Muslim should be outraged at the book, opposition to its publication needs to be carried out in a civilised fashion and governed by codes of good conduct and acceptable behaviour in order to minimise any unnecessary antagonism and diversion of resources. The opposition campaign should have been carefully engineered to be practical and without the violence and fanaticism which caused the loss of human lives.

2. The way in which lessons of the recent past have been forgotten so quickly. It is evident that some actions, if not thoroughly studied, can result in consequences which are quite the opposite of what was intended in the first place. A recent example of this phenomenon is the British government's attempt to ban the book "Spy Catcher" on the grounds that it undermines national security. This attempt has failed to produce the desired effect. On the contrary, the publicity which the book has attracted helped raise the sale figures for the book and made its author a millionaire. The British government, on the other hand, managed to get its fingers burnt in the process because it overlooked the fact that the essence of successful book publishing is an equally successful publicity drive.

3. The speed with which some fanatical elements of the so-called guardians of the faith grab any opportunity with a potential for boosting their own personal standing is phenomenal. As soon as a likely source of danger to the faith can be identified, the fanatics waste no time in mobilising the masses under their leadership. The high emotions and hysteria which is created in the process is both unnecessary and counterproductive.

4. The domain of "freedom of expression" needs to be re-defined. The British criminal law, for example, has provisions for charges such as causing grievous bodily harm or indecent assault, etc. Should there be parallel charges which are applicable to religious beliefs and faith? Unfortunately, some elements of the British media who can influence the government and public opinion and who project themselves as strong advocates of religious freedom abandoned their stance as soon as it became apparent that the religious freedom in question was that of the minority Muslim community. Some went further by exploiting the situation to attack the faith by casting the "first stone".

Husam Alqurra

OPEC's production policies: How it works and why it does not?

usually all incremental demand. The fact that incremental demand for OPEC oil will soon be shared, almost exclusively, by the Gulf countries raises interesting problems about their ability to reach agreement in the future on this issue. It also appears that while production agreements will increasingly become a Gulf affair, pricing policies will remain a contentious issue for the whole OPEC. Paradoxically the whole of OPEC was involved in negotiating production agreements in 1987-88, and the whole of OPEC ignored the price issue in these deliberations.

The argument developed at this point is that the pricing issue is the more fundamental one. Production programmes without an organic link with a pricing policy are like Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark. They could also be likened to an actor deprived of a role.

But why are OPEC's production agreements so short-lived and so prone to failure in their implementation? The answer that members of a cartel have an irresistible tendency to cheat is not sufficient. Some of the problems inherent are due to: (a) short-sighted political compromises and expedient tactics involved in the negotiations for production agreements; and (b) to the ambiguities surrounding Saudi Arabia's position towards

production programmes and its role as a swing supplier. Political compromises have aggravated the UAE quota problem which has marred all OPEC's production agreements, and their implementation, since 1983. They have caused Iran to cheat and Iraq to stay outside production agreements in 1986-88. Saudi Arabia's ambivalent attitudes towards production programmes led it to claim the role of swing supplier in 1982-84. This claim reinforced perceptions among other oil-exporting countries, that Saudi Arabia will bail them out come what may.

Finally, it is concluded that the Gulf countries have a political interest in retaining OPEC as a going concern, even though all the important oil policy decisions will be exclusively theirs to take. The assessment of OPEC's production programmes is that they are good as crisis-management devices, bad because of their inability to fulfil important stabilisation objectives and of their being divorced from pricing policies, and silly because they incorporate artificial and short-sighted solutions to serious long-term compromises which cause some temporary rejoicing to traders in oil markets but do little good to producing countries and to the oil industry whose real and significant interests are essentially long-term — O.APEC Bulletin

EN BREF

La Reine Noor en France

La Reine Noor a quitté lundi Amman pour Paris, pour une visite de quelques jours en France. Sa Majesté a inauguré mardi une exposition de mosaïques byzantines de Jordanie (Mont Nebo, Madaba...) à Lyon. La Reine doit également visiter à Lyon la Maison de l'Orient méditerranéen, centre de recherches organisateur de cette exposition, qui entretient des liens étroits avec les milieux universitaires et archéologiques de Jordanie.

Amnistie partielle

Le Roi Hussein a ordonné samedi la libération de tous les détenus qui ont purgé plus de la moitié de leur peine et de tous les détenus pour délits administratifs, à l'occasion de la création du Conseil de coopération arabe (CCA). Le souverain a également ordonné la réduction de moitié de la peine de tous les autres détenus. Aucune précision n'a été donnée sur le nombre de personnes qui doivent profiter de la décision. La dernière amnistie en Jordanie, dont ont bénéficié plus de mille détenus, remonte à novembre 1984, à l'occasion du 50ème anniversaire du Roi.

Frederico Mayor à Amman

Le directeur général de l'UNESCO, Frederico Mayor, a effectué de vendredi à dimanche une visite de trois jours en Jordanie, où il a rencontré le Roi Hussein. Il a annoncé une aide de 30.000 dinars de l'UNESCO à la Jordanie pour la restauration de Petra, inscrite en 1986 sur la liste du patrimoine international. Il a également annoncé le lancement d'un programme entre l'UNESCO et les pays arabes pour la rénovation des bases de l'enseignement primaire, sa généralisation et la suppression de l'analphabétisme chez les adultes d'ici l'an 2000.

Après le CCA, l'UMA

Les chefs d'Etats d'Algérie, de Tunisie, de Libye, de Mauritanie et du Maroc ont signé vendredi à Marrakech l'acte constitutif de l'Union du Maghreb arabe (UMA), que les peuples de la région appellent de leurs vœux depuis de longues années. La première présidence de l'UMA a été confiée au roi Hassan II du Maroc, pour un an. Cette union concerne 62 millions de personnes (80 millions pour le CCA). Inspirée par la CEE dans ses statuts, l'UMA entend préparer des relations économiques plus efficaces avec la Communauté européenne à la veille du "grand marché" de 1992. L'UMA est ouverte à l'adhésion d'autres pays arabes et africains.

Deux Palestiniens expulsés en Jordanie

Saleh Osman Abdallah, 22 ans, et sa sœur Haifa, 20 ans, vivant à Naplouse, ont été expulsés lundi par les autorités israéliennes vers la Jordanie car ils ne possédaient pas de permis de séjour. Convoqués par le gouverneur militaire pour retirer une carte d'identité militaire, ils ont été forcés de monter dans un Deep qui les a conduits au pont Damieh. Nés à Zaqra, ils étaient devenus orphelins en 1967 et vivaient depuis avec leur grand-mère à Naplouse. Arrivés en Jordanie avec leurs seuls vêtements et huit dinars, ils déclarent n'avoir jamais participé aux activités de l'intifada. La Croix-Rouge a été saisie de leur cas, considéré par Amman comme une violation des conventions internationales des droits de l'homme.

Guy Laroche est mort

Le couturier français Guy Laroche, un des précurseurs du prêt-à-porter, est décédé à l'âge de 66 ans vendredi à son domicile parisien des suites d'une longue maladie. Fils d'hôteliers de La Rochelle (ouest de la France), il était monté à Paris pendant la guerre. Il avait fait son apprentissage chez le couturier Jean Desse, de 1949 à 1955. Il avait ensuite ouvert une première boutique à son nom avenue Franklin-Roosevelt, dans le centre de Paris, avant de s'installer avenue Montaigne en 1961. Il a pu ensuite diversifier ses activités grâce à l'aide financière, à partir de 1968, d'un industriel, le baron Bich.

La Palestine à l'IMA

L'Institut du monde arabe (IMA) de Paris a retenu mercredi le principe de l'adhésion de la Palestine en son sein, a annoncé Edgar Pisani, président de l'IMA, qui a également annoncé l'adhésion de l'Egypte à cette institution. M. Pisani a indiqué que le terme "Palestine" a été préféré à celui d'"Etat palestinien". La France ne reconnaît pas cet Etat. «Le terme Palestine est expressif sur le plan politique, même s'il est juridiquement ambigu», a estimé M. Pisani.

Il a rencontré Arens puis Arafat au Caire

Chevardnadze optimiste

Le ministre soviétique des Affaires étrangères, Edouard Chevardnadze, a entamé cette semaine sa tournée de dix jours au Moyen-Orient, en visitant Damas, Amman et Le Caire. Il a présenté sur le conflit israélo-arabe des idées nouvelles. Mais surtout, il a créé l'événement en rencontrant le ministre israélien des Affaires étrangères, Moshe Arens, puis Yasser Arafat hier au Caire.

La rencontre Chevardnadze-Arens, annoncée samedi à Damas, a suscité des espoirs tant du côté israélien que palestinien. C'était la première du genre, et elle illustre le rapprochement progressif entre Tel-Aviv et Moscou, depuis la rupture de leurs relations diplomatiques en 1967. Cependant, à l'issue de deux heures et demie d'entretien, les deux ministres n'ont pas réussi à surmonter leurs divergences. M. Chevardnadze avait indiqué mardi qu'il allait essayer de convaincre Israël d'entamer le dialogue avec l'OLP. «Il y a des différences de vues entre nous, et nous allons poursuivre les discussions, au niveau des ministres des Affaires étrangères et d'autres niveaux», a déclaré le chef de la diplomatie soviétique.

M. Arens a de son côté précisé que les discussions israélo-soviétiques allaient reprendre dans les jours à venir, où des experts des deux pays se rencontreraient.

Mais Israël rejette toujours l'idée d'un dialogue avec l'OLP et d'une conférence internationale. L'Etat hébreu continue à prôner des négociations directes entre les parties en conflit, sous l'égide des seuls Etats-Unis et de l'URSS.

M. Chevardnadze devait rencontrer hier dans la soirée le leader de l'OLP, Yasser Arafat. «Je suis d'un naturel optimiste. C'est la seule attitude possible. Il faut trouver une issue au conflit», a-t-il dit.

Dimanche à Damas, le ministre soviétique avait révisé de nouvelles propositions pour le règlement du conflit, selon M. Chevardnadze, il convient de réunir un «comité



Edouard Chevardnadze

préparatoire des cinq membres permanents du conseil de sécurité des Nations-Unies (Etats-Unis, URSS, France, Chine, Royaume-Uni), fixant à neuf mois le délai nécessaire à la période préparatoire d'une conférence de paix.

Selon lui, il faut intensifier les consultations entre ces cinq membres, en contact avec les parties en conflit. Il suggère en outre d'utiliser le «potentiel pacificateur» de l'ONU, notamment par l'intermédiaire de son Secrétaire général, Javier Perez de Cuellar.

«Aucun pays ne peut arriver dès le départ avec des propositions acceptables par toutes les parties. Il faut donc unir nos efforts pour préparer un plan acceptable; c'est pourquoi je dis que je n'ai pas de proposition particulière dans ma poche», a déclaré M. Chevardnadze, qui doit encore se rendre à Bagdad et à Téhéran.

A Washington, le Secrétaire d'Etat James Baker a rejeté son idée d'un comité préparatoire, la jugeant prématurée. (F.D.)

Samir à Paris — Le premier ministre israélien, Yitzhak Shamir, a entamé mardi une visite officielle en France. Il s'est entretenu hier avec le président François Mitterrand, à qui il a reproché la position de la France en faveur d'une conférence internationale.

Il a de plus critiqué les relations existant entre Paris et l'OLP, selon lui «principal obstacle à la paix».

Chrétiens libanais

Guerre et paix armée

Malgré les apparences de la réconciliation, le désaccord reste entier au Liban entre le gouvernement chrétien de Michel Aoun et les Forces Libanaises (FL), milice chrétienne de Samir Geagea, après les combats sanglants qui ont opposé la semaine dernière les FL et l'armée.

«Les incidents de la semaine dernière appartiennent au passé», a déclaré lundi Samir Geagea, chef de la milice des Forces Libanaises (FL) à la sortie de son entretien avec Michel Aoun, qui dirige le gouvernement de militaires chrétiens à Beyrouth-Est.

Ces «incidents» inter-chrétiens, extrêmement violents, avaient fait 80 morts et 200 blessés. Le général Aoun avait accusé les FL d'avoir fomenté un coup d'Etat, d'avoir tenté de l'assassiner et surtout d'instituer un «Etat dans l'Etat» dans le «pays chrétien» au nord de Beyrouth, notamment en prélevant des «taxes illégales» que le général Aoun estime à 420.000 dollars par jour.

Si les deux parties entendent apaiser la tension, leur discord n'est pas pour autant réglée. M. Geagea a annoncé qu'il mettrait ses forces «à la disposition de l'armée», mais qu'il n'était pas

question de dissoudre les FL. Ces dernières, ajoute-t-il, ne céderont pas un pouce de terrain dans leur fief de Beyrouth-Est, tant que l'autre secteur de la capitale sera toujours sous le contrôle syrien.

Le général Aoun n'accepte pas que les FL (3.500 combattants) se considèrent comme le fer de lance de la lutte contre les Syriens, sur laquelle il entend établir le contrôle de l'armée libanaise (15.000 hommes) qu'il commande.

M. Geagea se déclare prêt à faire cesser la collecte de taxes par les FL dans les régions chrétiennes, mais seulement si un autre organisme paie les soldes des miliciens.

La réunion, vendredi, des assises chrétiennes, a abouti à la «consolidation du cessez-le-feu» intervenu mercredi, mais n'a pas réglé le problème de fond de la coexistence: les FL ont conservé intacte leur puissance de feu, plus importante que celle de l'armée, et leur autonomie politique. La milice prône une «fédéralisme», qui accorde une large autonomie aux musulmans et aux chrétiens, alors que Michel Aoun se déclare en faveur d'une réunification du Liban. (d'après agences)

Sinistrés de l'hiver

Agriculteurs: qui paiera?

Quelle indemnisation pour les agriculteurs sinistrés par les vagues de gel successives de cet hiver? Certains commentateurs estiment dans la presse arabe que l'Etat a «bon dos» et que les cultivateurs pourraient s'organiser eux-mêmes.

Avec trois vagues de gel depuis novembre, l'hiver 1988-89 est généralement considéré comme exceptionnellement rigoureux, voire comme une «catastrophe naturelle», selon l'expression du ministre de l'Agriculture. Dans le nord de la vallée, les températures sont tombées jusqu'à moins 6 degrés Celsius, descendant également au-dessous de zéro dans le centre de ce «verger de la Jordanie».

Le gel a surtout endommagé les cultures de courgettes, de bananes, d'aubergines et de haricots verts. Pour ces produits, le taux de destruction des récoltes a été évalué à quelque 50% dans la région centrale, avoisinant 100% dans les secteurs frontaliers, le long du Jourdain.

Au total, une superficie de 18.500 dunums de cultures ont été endommagées, 13% de la surface de fruits et légumes d'hiver cultivée dans l'ensemble de la vallée. «Brûlées» par le gel, les pousses n'ont pas pu donner naissance à des bourgeons, alors que l'hiver est généralement doux dans la vallée.

Le gouvernement a annoncé il y a quelques semaines une indemnisation pour les agriculteurs.

Cette contribution de l'ensemble de la nation au soutien des sinistrés n'est cependant pas du goût de tout le monde: le métier de cultivateur est par définition soumis aux aléas des caprices climatiques: bon an, mal an, disent-ils en substance, dans des commentaires dont la presse en arabe s'est faite l'écho ces dernières semaines. Quand les agriculteurs font une bonne saison, ils ne reversent pas une partie de leur bénéfices au budget de l'Etat. C'est donc à eux d'économiser sur les bonnes années pour compenser les effets des mauvaises, concluent-ils.

En 1987 déjà, la question s'était posée à la suite des inondations qui avaient mis à mal des exploitations dans la région de Jérash. On avait alors émis l'idée d'une «assurance agricole», qui avait donné lieu à beaucoup de débats.

L'idée a été relancée cet hiver et semble gagner du terrain, puisqu'on puise qu'on parle au ministère de l'Agriculture d'un projet de loi pour établir une telle assurance.

En attendant, l'étendue du sinistre reste à chiffrer par la commission d'enquête formée par le ministère. Et pour conjurer le froid, les agriculteurs de la vallée utilisent un procédé expéditif: on fait brûler à proximité des cultures des pneus, afin de réchauffer l'atmosphère. Bon apêti.

Suleiman Sweiss

L'Europe rappelle ses ambassadeurs à Téhéran

Versets sataniques: la contre-attaque

Les ministres des Affaires étrangères de la CEE ont décidé lundi à Bruxelles de rappeler en consultation leurs ambassadeurs ou chargés d'affaires en Iran et de suspendre les visites de haut niveau dans ce pays, à la suite de la «condamnation à mort» de l'écrivain Salman Rushdie par l'ayatollah Khomeiny.

Les ministres, qui ont également décidé de limiter la liberté de déplacement des diplomates iraniens dans le Marché commun, ont affirmé leur souci de protéger l'auteur des «Versets sataniques», Britannique d'origine indienne.

Téhéran a riposté mardi en rappelant ses diplomates en poste dans les pays de la CEE. La décision européenne, sous prise sous l'impulsion des Britanniques et des Allemands, intervient au moment où plusieurs pays occidentaux tentaient de normaliser leurs relations avec l'Iran, notamment le Royaume-Uni.

Hans-Dietrich Genscher, ministre ouest-allemand des Affaires étrangères, s'est montré le plus ardent partisan de mesures fermes contre Téhéran. La RFA, le plus important partenaire économique occidental de l'Iran, avait déjà annoncé vendredi le rappel de son chargé d'affaires à Téhéran.

Cette décision, ferme et unanime, constitue un avertissement aux tenants de la ligne dure à Téhéran, qui s'opposent aux modérés partisans de l'ouverture vers l'Occident, sous l'impulsion du président du parlement, Hashemi Rafsanjani.

La condamnation décrétée il y a une semaine par Khomeiny, assortie d'une prime de plusieurs millions de dollars, semble sans appel, malgré les «regrets» exprimés samedi par Rushdie. L'écri-



vain qui s'adressait aux «vrais fidèles de l'Islam», avait «profondément regretté l'embarras qu'a provoqué cette publication». Le numéro d'un iranien a cependant maintenu son «verdict» face à un «livre blasphématoire pour l'Islam, le Coran et le Prophète Mahomet».

Combattre la pensée par la pensée

A Paris, une centaine d'intellectuels de culture arabe ou islamique ont manifesté dimanche contre la condamnation de Rushdie, qui a également reçu le soutien du prix Nobel de littérature, Naguib Mahfouz. Ce dernier a estimé qu'aucun livre ne pouvait ébranler l'Islam et qu'il fallait «combattre la pensée par la pensée».

En Jordanie, Cheikh Chacra, directeur de l'aide aux défavorisés au ministère des Affaires religieuses, a estimé samedi qu'il fallait demander à l'auteur «de se repentir avant de la condamner à mort», comme le demande la Charia (loi coranique). Il a suggéré qu'un pays islamique, comme l'Arabie Saoudite entre en contact avec lui et lui demande d'avoir son erreur, afin de le ramener à l'Islam par le repentir.

De quoi parle-t-on?

Parmi les passages qui ont provoqué la colère des musulmans, celui où les compagnons du Prophète sont qualifiés de «racaille» et de «vauxiens». L'ouvrage met également en doute des révélations divines du Prophète.

Un provocateur-né

L'écrivain a présenté ses «regrets» aux musulmans, estimant que «cette expérience doit nous rappeler que nous devons être conscients de la sensibilité des autres». Il ne cesse cependant de réaffirmer que «qu'il s'agit d'un livre de fiction, qui ne peut en aucun cas être pris au pied de la lettre».

Salman Rushdie est un provocateur-né, membre actif avec Harold Pinter, d'un cercle d'intellectuels de gauche «anti-thatcheriens». Né en 1947 à Bombay dans une famille musulmane, il est cependant un pur produit de la société britannique dont il a fréquen-

té, adolescent, les prestigieux établissements de Rugby et Cambridge.

Toujours prêt à dénoncer la société thatcherienne, socialiste militant et dénonciateur du racisme et de l'intolérance, la première réaction de Rushdie aux polémiques suscitées par son livre avait été de déclarer qu'il aurait dû aller plus loin dans sa «dénonciation du fanatisme religieux». Dans une interview, il affirme: «Les juifs et les chrétiens peuvent à l'occasion plaisanter sur leur religion. Mais les musulmans n'ont pas le sens de l'humour. Si Woody Allen avait été musulman, il serait un homme mort aujourd'hui».

Le succès des «Versets sataniques» (56.000 exemplaires vendus en Grande-Bretagne) ne peut effacer l'amertume de Rushdie. Conscient de l'aspect provocateur de son ouvrage, il ne pouvait cependant imaginer que sa tête serait mise à prix. (d'après agences)

Pas de condamnation des violences israéliennes

Prudence à Washington

Les Etats-Unis ont confirmé qu'ils entendaient ne redéfinir leur politique au Proche Orient qu'avec la plus grande prudence et sans hâte, en mettant leur veto à une résolution critiquant les pratiques d'Israël dans les territoires palestiniens occupés, au Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU vendredi.

Le veto américain a causé une nette déception dans les milieux diplomatiques arabes, où l'on considérait cet examen du Conseil sur l'aggravation de la situation en Cisjordanie et Gaza, comme un test de la volonté de la nouvelle administration américaine de faire quelque pas supplémentaire sur la voie d'un règlement du conflit.

Certains diplomates se demandaient si ce test n'avait pas été mené un peu trop tôt, et si l'aurait pas été préférable de laisser le temps au président George Bush de mettre en place tous les responsables de sa politique au Proche-Orient, compte tenu des risques de voir un veto alourdir l'atmosphère pour la poursuite des discussions entre les Etats-Unis et les dirigeants de l'OLP et d'envoyer le mauvais signal à Jérusalem.

La France, qui participe au côté de l'Espagne et de la Grèce à la «Troika» de la CEE sur le Proche Orient, a souligné devant le Conseil de sécurité qu'il était devenu «urgent» de préparer une

conférence internationale de paix, le «statu quo de plus en plus meurtrier n'étant plus acceptable».

Mais les Etats-Unis ont indiqué en faisant circuler parmi les membres du conseil un contre-projet de résolution de dernière minute, que leurs priorités étaient tout à fait différentes. L'amorce d'une solution réside selon eux, dans le respect d'Israël des conventions humanitaires de Genève, mais également dans la volonté des Palestiniens d'accepter leur part de responsabilités et de mettre un terme au soulèvement (intifada) pour s'engager avec Israël sur la voie du dialogue et du compromis.

La situation au Proche Orient a été évoquée à plusieurs reprises ces derniers jours lors des étapes du secrétaire d'Etat James Baker en Europe, qui a été pressé par certains de ses homologues européens d'entreprendre au plus tôt une mission de paix au Proche-Orient.

Selon son entourage, M. Baker s'est montré réservé, prônant au contraire la prudence. A ce stade, il préférerait, selon les mêmes sources, encourager des mesures de confiance et l'ouverture d'un dialogue entre les dirigeants israéliens et des notables palestiniens proches de l'OLP pour mener vers l'autonomie, en tant qu'étape intermédiaire d'un règlement définitif. (agences).

FIGURE

La photo aveugle

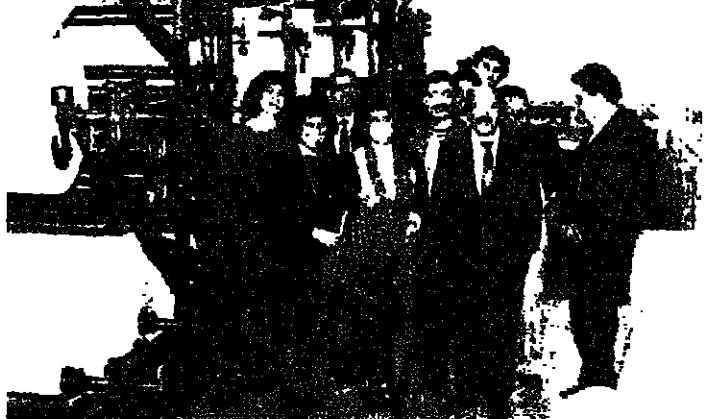


Photographe et aveugle. L'association peut sembler incongrue, et pourtant, l'Egyptien Nazih Rizk a récemment exposé 300 œuvres photographiques à l'université de Los Angeles, chaudement accueillies par un public averti. Une histoire peu banale, qui commence par une bagarre dans la cour d'une école. Le petit Nazih reçoit un mauvais coup au visage et perd la vue. A l'hôpital, où l'on tente en vain une opération pour lui rendre ses yeux, il reçoit la visite d'un camarade. Pour le réconforter, l'ami malade n'a rien trouvé de mieux que de lui apporter en cadeau... un appareil photo. Nazih ne se vexe pas, bien au contraire, et relève le défi: pendant dix ans, il va s'entraîner à la photo. Sa technique est maintenant

bien au point. Il jure d'abord pendant 24 heures pour affiner ses sens. Au toucher, à l'ouïe et à l'odorat, il «repère» son sujet et décrit à son assistant le cadrage qu'il veut obtenir. Celui-ci place l'appareil à la distance voulue, puis Nazih règle lui-même la vitesse et l'ouverture, se repérant à l'oreille par le cliquetis des bagues autour de l'objectif. Il ne voit pas le résultat de ses prises de vues, mais les autres jugent: médaille d'or du Centre artistique John Kennedy (Washington).

Nazih Rizk définit ainsi son art: «Quand j'ai perdu mes yeux, ma vision intérieure s'est ouverte. Si l'on veut vraiment voir la beauté, il suffit de l'éclairer à la lumière de son cœur». (F.D., d'après Al Majal)

CCF: les visiteurs du soir



Un groupe de sept étudiants de niveau «français actif» du Centre culturel français d'Amman a visité mardi les locaux du Rai-Jordan Times. Ils étaient accompagnés de leur professeur, Olivier Roche. Les étudiants ont porté un intérêt particulier aux calligraphes, qui écrivent à la plume tous les titres du journal en arabe. On les voit ici devant les rotatives de l'imprimerie.

A L'AFFICHE

CINEMA

Kramer contre Kramer

De Robert Benton, avec Meryl Streep et Dustin Hoffman: une femme quitte son mari en lui laissant son petit garçon de six ans. Le père redécouvre son enfant. Mais bientôt, l'épouse veut récupérer celui-ci. Cinq Oscars.

Centre américain, jeudi 23 et dimanche 26 à 19h00 (en anglais)

Fantozzi

De Luciano Salce, avec Paolo Villaggio, Anna Mazzamuro, Gigi Reder: comédie italienne.

Haya Arts Centre, jeudi 23 à 19h30 (en italien)

Ciné-club

Séances respectivement à 13h00, 15h00, 17h00, 19h00, 20h30. Le 23: Mr. versus Mrs. Cotton club, The hero and the terror, Chinese film, Deven Heart. Le 24: Golden child, Peggy Sue got married, Algerian film, Chinese film, The chameleon. Le 25: Fantasm (2), A crime of the heart, Koolhaas Kassam. Chinese film, Young lions. Le 26: Blow-up, The postman always rings twice, Al Mousma, a Chinese film, Cliff me. Le 27: Prince of darkness, Francis, Allah Hind wa Camilla (Egypti). Chinese film, Coming to America. Le 28: Missing, Dead pool, Zanjat Rajal meomun (Egypti), Chinese film, Cry freedom. (1er et 2mars non roga)

Films en version originale. Tel. 603901.

TELEVISION

«Imogène», téléfilm de François Leterrier, avec Dominique Lavanant: en Bretagne et à Paris, les aventures romanesques d'une femme courageuse mais naïve, chargée d'une mission ultra-secrète (JTV, vendredi 24 à 17h30).

EXPOSITIONS

Brise-glace

Ensemble multimédia d'œuvres réalisées à bord d'un bateau «brise-glace» de la marine suédoise en mer gelée, portant secours aux naufragés des icebergs et aux navires bloqués par la glace. Cinéastes, musiciens, photographes ont embarqué ensemble vers le Grand-Nord. Resultat: un long-métrage, un livre-album, un reportage radio, une exposition de photos.

Centre culturel royal, le samedi 25 à 19h00 CCF, du mardi 28 au 9 mars.

Françoise Petrovitch, Gravures

Les gravures de Françoise Petrovitch, professeur d'expression plastique et de stylisme, transcendent l'apparence dans un tourbillon.

CCF, Jusqu'au 2 mars.

Le Holiday Inn changé en Philadelphia

Retour vers le futur

Ne les cherchez plus. Depuis le 1er février il n'y a plus d'hôtels Holiday Inn en Jordanie. Leurs deux immeubles, à Amman et Aqaba, sont maintenant toujours debout, mais baptisés «Philadelphia International» pour le premier et «Holiday International» pour le second.

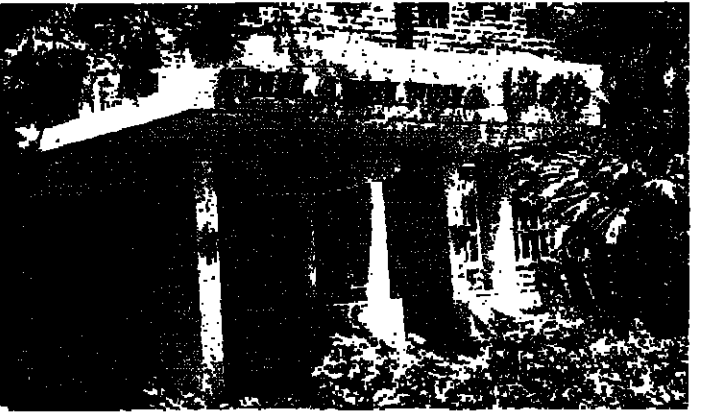
Depuis, les rumeurs, grande spécialité locale, vont bon train sur les raisons de ce deuxième baptême: changement de direction, retrait de la franchise Holiday Inn... «C'est un fait, nous n'avons plus de franchise», admet Michel Nazzal, directeur de la société propriétaire, «mais c'est nous qui en avons décidé ainsi».

Selon le maître de ces lieux, l'image de marque de la chaîne américaine que les Nazzal avaient introduit en Jordanie en 1976 (Aqaba) et 1979 (Amman) en construisant ces deux hôtels, n'était pas à la hauteur d'une clientèle constituée en grande

partie d'hommes d'affaires. «On pense plus à un motel de luxe qu'à un vrai cinq étoiles», estime Michel Nazzal.

Autre explication, et non des moindres, le coût de la franchise: 5,5% des bénéfices des deux hôtels devaient être versés chaque année à la société Holiday Inn. Soit une manne annuelle de 1 millions de dollars pour la chaîne américaine, selon M. Nazzal. «A ce tarif, ils n'avaient aucun intérêt à nous retirer la franchise», conclut-il.

Quant aux rumeurs selon lesquelles le service offert par les deux hôtels jordaniens n'était pas à la hauteur des standards imposés par Holiday Inn, M. Nazzal les écarte d'un revers de manche: «Bien au contraire, nous les surpassons largement, et nos services n'ont pas à rougir, loin de là, de la comparaison avec d'autres grands hôtels de la capitale», dit-il. «Et puis nous étions obligés de nous conformer à des règles américaines tout à fait placées sous ces latitudes. Les



Le premier hôtel Philadelphia, en face du théâtre romain: un des premiers grands bâtiments de d'Amman, construit en 1928.

François Ducroux

To feed a changing world

The 'greenhouse effect' — the gradual heating of the earth's atmosphere — will change the way mankind grows food. It may force nations to change their diets and render fertile lands unusable for anything but the hardest of crops.

By Maggie James

LONDON — As the world moves inexorably under the unwelcome canopy of the greenhouse effect, it faces the inevitable challenge of feeding itself in the fast changing environment for traditional agriculture. How ready is it for that change?

Scientific writer and broadcaster Colin Tudge, author of a new book *Food Crops for the Future*, published by Basil Blackwell in Oxford, believes the greenhouse effect on the planet may confront us with that monumental challenge sooner than expected. Whether the greenhouse effect is with us now, or whether the past year's freak weather in many parts of the world has been part of a historical cycle, remains moot.

But as scientists have stressed frequently in recent studies, when the greenhouse effect does officially commence its momentum would be hard to stop. Tudge

puts that in perspective, "throughout most of their existence," he says, "human beings have had very little control over their own destiny."

The problem of how to use science well remains one of the great challenges for the world community. "Science is immensely powerful," Tudge points out, "it is the greatest single agent of change. It needs on the one hand to be handled delicately, and on the other to be wielded subtly. In general neither of these things happen."

The environmental change now being talked about will result from a global warming of the earth, caused when a buildup of carbon dioxide and other gases traps the sun's rays in the lower atmosphere. Indiscriminate burning of fossil fuels such as coal and oil, and the release of chemicals into the atmosphere, already has raised fears that there is more unwholesome gaseous mass surrounding the planet than may be

desirable.

Weather changes

The weather changes on a warmer planet, Tudge says, will cause sudden shifts from one kind of climate to another. One result of the global warming will be rising ocean levels and widespread flooding. Another will be radical changes in the agricultural patterns. Tudge asserts that we cannot stop the "greenhouse effect" happening, but we can make contingency plans for it — especially to feed ourselves.

"All crops, worldwide, are grown close to their physiological limits to get the most out of them. But this means that they are vulnerable: a two-degree fall in global temperature, for example, would eliminate the Canadian wheat crop," he says. The need for a global strategy to cope with climatic change alongside a rapidly expanding population therefore becomes obvious.

By the year 2000 the world population will have exceeded six billion and by the middle of the next century, 10 billion. "If our ancestors had not learned to cultivate plants, all those millennia ago, then the human population could never have risen to more

than a fraction of a per cent of the figure that is soon liable to be attained," says Tudge.

"If we do not continue the processes of cultivation more adroitly and efficiently, then we have little chance of feeding the extraordinary numbers of people who will be born into this world in the next few decades, and no chance whatever of doing so without obliterating our fellow species."

The improvement or maintenance of flavour in food crops is just as important as yield or nutritiousness in the feeding of human beings. "Westerners who have not experienced hunger often seem to imagine that people who are hungry will eat anything," points out Tudge.

"This simply is not the case. Even when people are in severe danger of starving, they may find it physically difficult to consume food that is unfamiliar. In addition, people who are most in danger of starvation are in general those who rely heavily upon a single crop: rice, perhaps, or sorghum or millet."

If the world's people are to be fed without destroying all other forms of life, then plants must be cultivated in many different cir-

cumstances and many different ways. This is where science will be invaluable.

As an example, Tudge reveals how 750 million people, about one in six of the world's population, live in the areas known as the semi-arid tropics. These areas extend through Asia, including much of India; across the middle of Africa, south of the Sahara, in the region known as the Sahel; and into South America.

Part of these regions is irrigated, but most relies entirely upon rain that falls only for a few brief weeks each year. Farming inevitably is small scale, and the ambition is not to feed the cities, as it is in Europe, but for farmers to subsist, with enough left over for a little income. In these regions, says Tudge, crops must be bred above all for resilience.

Artificial selection

Scientists can replace the forces of natural selection with artificial selection and alter plants genetically for easier and more responsive cultivation. These are designated "improvements." Tudge indicates that some of these improvements make the crops more compliant, for example, making them germinate, grow and ma-

ture within a certain time.

Plants can be established which resist the stresses of their environment, for instance where there is drought, excessive heat, pests or viruses. Quality can be improved in many ways and yield can be raised.

But Tudge says that crop improvement is difficult and expensive — not least because the reproductive biology of plants is complex — and depends on worldwide cooperation and science of a very high degree.

"Agriculture is 10,000 years old but the modern age of plant breeding based on genetics began only in this century, and genetic engineering is only into its second decade. In a hundred years' time, discussion of possible new species to cultivate might seem simply quaint — for by then the world's principal crops, however many there are, may already contain genes from tens of thousands of species," he asserts.

Tudge identifies another area of importance as the grazing lands of the world. If these were well-managed and well-stocked with appropriate plants, he says, they could transform the prospects of the whole world. — Academic File.

Food Crops for the Future



COLIN TUDGE



Black South Africans building homes not their own

Apartheid housing creates a vigilante atmosphere

By Andrew Steele
Reuter

JOHANNESBURG — An atmosphere of vigilante justice has concentrated the minds of South Africa's ruling politicians into sorting out the middle of the country's apartheid housing laws. The root of the problem is the ruling National Party's (NP) so-called group areas laws which impose strict residential segregation by race.

The vast majority of non-whites are forced to live in separate townships, often distant from the "white" towns, or in impoverished tribal homelands set up by Pretoria.

But pressures of urbanisation and a chronic township housing shortage have increasingly forced non-whites into "grey areas" — poor white districts, often close to the city centre, where police turn a blind eye to group areas contravention.

The picture is further complicated by legislation which has given the go-ahead for official "grey areas" much to the consternation of the biggest opposition party in parliament, the far-right Conservative Party (CP).

CP supporters have taken to the streets to prevent what they see as the dangerous erosion of housing apartheid.

In one incident a banner-waving crowd, including a CP town councillor, hung a hangman's noose outside the newly-bought home of an Indian family in Mayfair West, a white suburb of Johannesburg.

The family abandoned any hope of moving in.

Police took no action against the white demonstrators, despite vigorous protests from blacks and white liberals who asserted that a similar demonstration of blacks would have incurred the full wrath of the law.

The success of the CP supporters emboldened others to take similar steps. A second Indian homeowner in Mayfair West has been threatened and is being prosecuted for contravention of the group areas laws.

In the Indian Ocean city of

Durban, where an estimated 67,000 people are thought to live in the "wrong" area, leaflets circulate white districts calling on residents to resist the "pushy, noisy, overbearing eastern way of life."

The leaflets, which accuse the city's Indian population of everything from noise to bad driving, exhort whites to take direct action if non-whites try to move in.

At the small CP-controlled town of Kraaifontein, near Cape Town, authorities switched off the power and water supply to a house in a white area which had been bought by a coloured (mixed race) family.

Such shows of intolerance have been roundly condemned by liberal and pro-government press alike, with calls for an end to the group areas laws.

"(It) has nothing to do with political principles or separate development or some imagined protection of a white nation. It was pure and simple racism," the moderate Star Newspaper said. "It is apartheid philosophy re-

duced to its basic nastiness," it added.

"The erection of whites-only signs and the running of an Indian out of a white suburb demonstrate that if the CP ever came to power, the country would be in terrible trouble," the pro-government Citizen Newspaper said in a recent editorial.

"(This is) not to mention the encouragement the CP's actions would give to overseas countries to impose more sanctions and isolate South Africa totally," it added.

Nationalist MP Johann Vilonei challenged his own party to apply the group areas laws or scrap them altogether.

"We cannot leave the group area policy hanging in the air as it is now. It is high time we made up our minds."

"We must find ways of opening areas that must be opened as soon as possible and closing the others. Or, if we cannot close them, we must tell our people that we cannot, and scrap the act," Vilonei said.

PLAZA

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TIMES

Friday

SUNDAY & EVERYDAY
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JD.6.500 Adults
JD.3.500 Children

Saturday

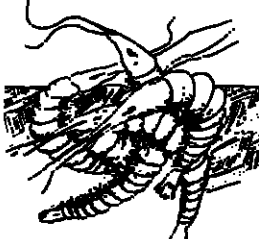
Prime Rib
Night
at the
Coffee Shop



Prime Rib
Yorkshire Pudding
Baked Potato, Vegetables
Selection of Sweets
JD.6.500 pp

Sunday

Jumbo Shrimp
Night
at the
Andalusia



Sea Food Cocktail
Shrimps: Grilled, Deep Fried,
or Provencal
Selection of Sweets
JD.10.000 pp

Monday

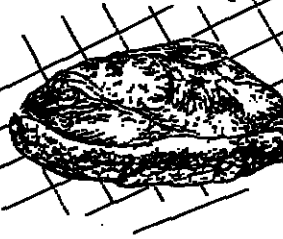
Spanish Paella
Night
at the
Coffee Shop



Sea Food Soup
Traditional Paella
(Rice, Shrimp, Hamour &
Calamari etc...)
Selection of Sweets
JD.6.500 pp

Tuesday

Steak Night
at the
Coffee Shop



Charcoal Broiled Steak
Green Salad
Baked or Fried Potatoes
Vegetables
Selection of Sweets
JD.6.500 pp

Wednesday

Indian Buffet
Night
at the
Coffee Shop



Beef, Lamb, Chicken,
Shrimp or Vegetables.
Nam Bread
Selection of Sweets
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Thursday

Sea Food
Night
at the
Andalusia



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Selection of Sweets
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Focus on people

Helping the needy

EDITORS NOTE: As of this week the Jordan Times introduces a new weekend column to its readers — Focus on people — which will present Jordanians from all walks of life.

By Mariam M. Shahin

AMMAN — Social services and voluntary work are talked about, written about and often capitalised upon. Very few people ever bother to find out who actually gets the work done. Joan Mary Majali is one of those women behind the scene. This week Mrs. Majali agreed to talk to Focus on People about her experiences in voluntary and charitable work in Jordan.

"I came to Jordan 33 years ago, after getting married. I had been educated and trained as a nurse in London where I grew up," she recalled. "Upon arriving in Jordan I began applying my vocation as a volunteer with the Near East Christian Association for Refugees," one of the organisations aiding Palestine refugees in the 50s and 60s in Jordan.

"My husband was director of medical services in the Armed Forces in the late 50s and I began to help out, on a voluntary basis, in the nursing sector of the army," she said. "At that time there were no female nurses in the army; they were all male orderlies. Female nurses were rather looked down upon in that decade of Jordan's history. I was raising my three children at the time, so I was not able to give all my energy to this very worthy cause. Infant mortality was very high at the time and many women, country folk in particular, needed some guidelines as to ways of making their lives more safe and practical." Mrs. Majali pointed out that despite the wild west atmosphere of survival of the fittest, "Jordan was very pleasant in its communal atmosphere where everyone knew each other and people's generosity and kindness were genuine and simple."

"For quite some time I acted as a liaison between various teams of British nurses and the nursing sector of the Jordanian army. The doors that were being opened were endless; sometimes I would work up to 14 to 16 hours a day. We were involved in the process of transforming the medical services, based on traditional means and forms, to western means and methods of providing medical services to the community," Mrs. Majali said.

"Nothing went too far in the efforts exerted towards the betterment of hygienic and medical conditions at the time," according to Mrs. Majali. "For three months I worked in the laundry sector of the hospital at Marka, introducing the special methods of sterilising hospital linen and clothing."

Mrs. Majali's efforts paid off in the early sixties the Princess Mona College of Nursing opened its doors.

"The Al Bashir Hospital already had the equivalent of a four year nursing college but the opening of the second college more solidly introduced nursing as a social and medical service."

"Although the nursing team was originally foreign, it was gradually turned over to qualified Jordanians." Subsequently Mrs. Majali became involved with Ladies of the White Bed, a voluntary organisation which promoted the welfare of patients and staff in civilian hospitals.

"In the late sixties Jordanians became more aware than ever of the need for voluntary social services. Involvement of the public in social services should technically go beyond awareness, of course. There are a few snags which still have to be dealt with, such as duplication and coordination, which are essential to any effective and efficiently run organisation or service."

"What is meant by duplication is that, 'people often give help or volunteer to give help where they think help is needed. Each one wants to do his or her own thing' and consequently projects that should get priority often don't. Organisations or committees dealing with the same cause, such as deafness or blindness don't always coordinate activities or with one another. Until we deal with this aspect we will not have completely succeeded in our aims to help the needy."

Mrs. Majali points out that in the past, it was mainly women from the diplomatic corps and members of the foreign community that volunteered to help out in charitable organisations. "The Jordanian woman of today is very much aware of the role she has to play in her community. The need for her to actively participate is more evident to her now than ever before. She has become more aware of the needs of her own people."

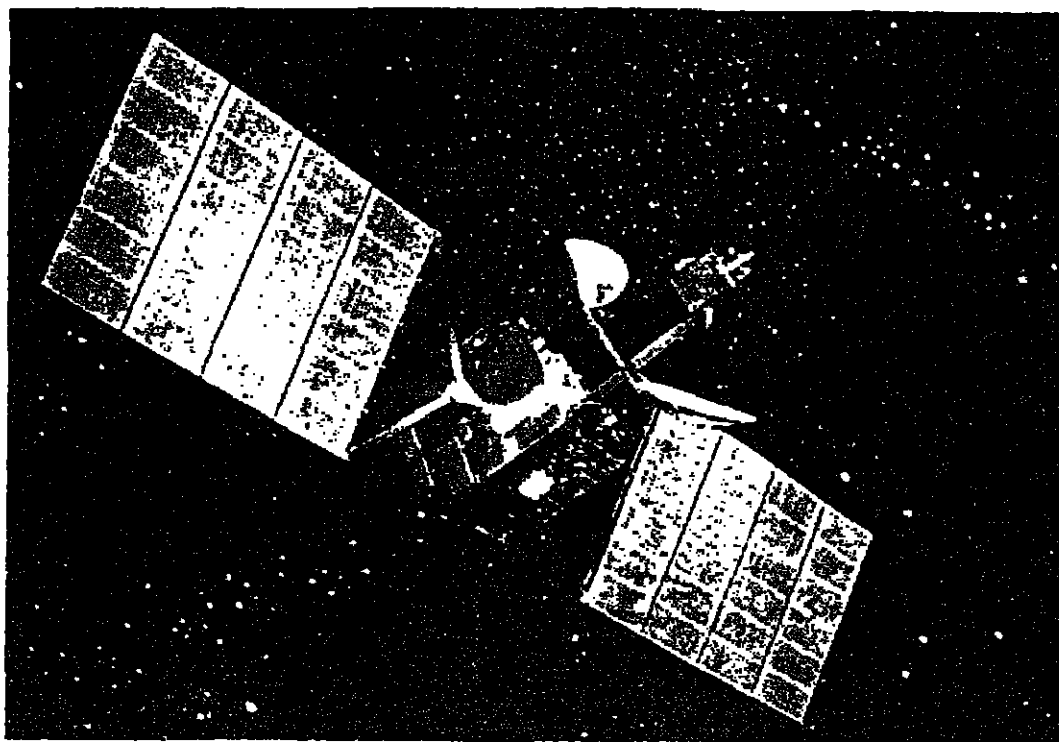
As Jordanian society grows and changes and extended family becomes less visible than in the past and thus the need for social services and voluntary social workers increases.

Mrs. Majali also spoke of her involvement in the Jordanian Swimming Federation, when it was first created. "I was mainly involved in the federation as a mother of three avid swimmers. It is unfortunate that the availability of sports facilities for children are still limited to the chosen few of Jordan's youth. The main obstacles to extending sports facilities to a larger number of youth in Jordan is more likely to be financial than social. It is a shame because sports are really an essential part of a child's healthy development."

In 1980-81, the year of the handicapped, Mrs. Majali became the secretary of the National Committee for the Handicapped. She had previously been involved in the activities of the Cheshire Home which was to become the Al Hussein Society for the Physically Handicapped. She is also involved in organising the activities of the Sports Federation for the Handicapped and is vice president of the Cerebral Palsy Foundation.

Mrs. Majali and her husband, Dr. Abdul Salam Majali, the president of the University of Jordan, live in Amman. They have three children, Samer, Sawan and Shadi-Ramzi (a small reminder of his mother's Scottish forefathers), and are grandparents three times over.

Mrs. Majali stressed that Jordanian charitable and voluntary institutions should be run by Arabs and not foreigners. "That is why I have never accepted the key post in any of the organisations I have worked with," she pauses. "But, then again, why shouldn't I? I am an Arab."



Satellites — medicine doctors in space

Artificial satellites orbiting the earth far out in space already represent a mine of information about our planet. What contributions can they make to primary health care?

By Petar Jovanovic

GENEVA — The efforts of the World Health Organisation and member states to attain "health for all" through the primary care approach requires support from all available technologies. Remote sensing and sending by space satellites deserves to be

seen as the latest addition to that universal effort.

The application of satellite remote sensing in primary health care needs to be explored. The full impact of this technology will be realised only with careful project planning and the cooperation of specialists from many disciplines.

Many of the WHO member countries already use remote sensing imagery in health-related fields, including agriculture, forestry, public works, water development, geology, urban planning, communications, education, climatology, meteorology, assessment of natural resources, and monitoring of natural disasters.

But medicine so far has not included this technology among

its broad approaches to preventive health care. Although public health can adapt this technology as a powerful tool to reduce morbidity and mortality from many diseases, it is still not numbered among the users of satellite remote sensing.

Satellite sensory systems can detect environmental parameters closely linked to pathogens or vectors of diseases. Of course the satellites, orbiting high above the earth's atmosphere, cannot observe these organisms nor the symptoms of diseases in humans. But they can determine those parameters of the air, water, soil and vegetation which can be examined to determine the likely presence in the environment of the pathogenic agents. This information can be of value to epidemiologists and have immediate potential for disease control.

Sensory systems

parameters detectable from space include the temperature of water, air and soil; humidity of the air; turbidity of water and its alkalinity, acidity, velocity of flow; aquatic vegetation and catchment areas; quantity of vegetation; presence of minerals, plankton, chlorophyll and heavy metals.

The sensory systems capable of measuring those parameters from space include radar, laser beams, microwaves, x-rays, ultra-violet, infra-red and, of course, optically visible light. If more specific sensors are needed, it would be possible to develop new ones or adapt existing systems.

When the eight essential elements of primary health care, as defined in the Declaration of Alma Ata are examined, it is not hard to foresee a wide-ranging application of satellite technology in health.

Education about prevailing health problems can provide both remote sensing and remote sending of messages and pictures. Combined with all other methods of education, it can transfer necessary knowledge to the community and help it to train all those who take part in education and training activities.

In food supply, remote sensing surveys can identify good land and soil for proper food production, and help control industrial pollution. It can facilitate an easier food supply in remote areas and indicate the extent of problems in normal or in emergency situations.

Safe water and basic sanitation depend on a well-run water supply. Satellite imagery can play an

important role in locating water resources, monitoring the quality of surface water, and surveillance of water pollution. Areas that are most likely to be flooded or exposed to droughts can be identified. This in turn can sound a warning about the risk of water-borne diseases.

As for maternal and child health care — since mothers and children are most vulnerable to endemic infectious diseases and water and food problems — systematic remote sensing surveillance of environmental situations can predict, locate and help control health hazards. Radio and television communications can also popularise curative health measures.

Bacterial infections

Many viral bacterial infections are linked to climate, being arthropod-borne, air-borne, water-related diseases. So the planning of immunisation can be based on satellite surveillance. Sometimes epidemics start during migratory events, during the mingling of populations in disaster situations, or near water supplies. In all these situations, satellite imagery can help to predict potential epidemics and to plan immunisation.

Among the main locally endemic diseases are malaria, schistosomiasis, onchocerciasis (river blindness), and trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness). The presence of the parasitic agents concerned can be deduced by detecting indicators of their presence of physical conditions likely to encourage their growth (or the growth of their vectors).

The distribution and differentiation of environmental parameters can then be compared with the patterns of morbidity and mortality in the community in order to identify the link between pathogens and environment. This method of satellite surveillance, together with studies of environmental changes of air, water, soil and vegetation, can locate potential places of growth of pathogens and vectors.

Subsequent field action can help to cut out the links in the biological chain which encourages the survival of the pathogens and their vectors.

Common diseases and injuries are usually dealt with by local

health personnel. However, fast advice and guidance given to local health workers from larger health centres by more skilled personnel can be based on satellite radio and television communications. Indeed medical emergencies have already been handled in this way in remote islands of the Pacific. Training in this kind of health care can be orally and visually provided by satellite to inaccessible areas.

Provision of essential drugs is more a problem of production, but it is not totally separated from satellite technology, which can play an important role in locating places where the needs are urgent. It can also identify the best soils and land for growing essential herbs for pharmaceutical production.

On a broader canvas, satellite imagery can detect environmental degradation over large areas and identify specific details. Large areas can be seen in a small picture. Repetitive coverage over long periods allows us to follow and study seasonal and other changes that are relevant to epidemiological surveillance and control measures.

If combined with ground or sensor systems and field verification of data, the results can provide a reliable data-base for public health planning. The communication of messages and television pictures can reach every spot on the earth, however remote.

Would the introduction of this technology in public health be expensive? Even though resources and manpower are limited, public health workers in many countries can use existing photographs commissioned for other government sectors or commercial enterprise. It is not difficult to learn to interpret them and understand them.

The health experts have only to read the existing data in a new way. Remote sensing facilities exist in many countries, and public health authorities only need to seek access to these available resources.

Public health is already in a position to open a new chapter in preventive medicine, "satellite epidemiology." When to these functions can be added the transmission of advice and guidance on curative care, it will be possible to speak of "satellite medicine." — Academic File.

Dr. Petar Jovanovic is a Yugoslav physician, and was the official representative of the International Astronautical Federation to the Technical Discussions held during last year's World Health Assembly. This article is adapted from a study he wrote for World Health, the Geneva-based WHO magazine.

Endives — the new chic of the palate

By Eva Kaluzynska

Reuter

KAMPENHOUT — The unassuming endive, traditional winter fare in Belgium, is being touted as the new glamour vegetable.

Growers out to capture export markets are promoting the country's favourite vegetables as a gourmet specialty.

The cigar-shaped endive — "chicon" to Belgium's French speakers, "witloof", literally whiteleaf, to the Flemish — is a fleshy, slightly bitter vegetable, grown in total darkness and served either raw or cooked.

It is called chicory in Britain and Japan.

"Belgians already eat about 80 heads of endive a year each. We can hardly sell any more than we already do here," said Gerrit Heremans, president of one of the country's biggest daily endive auctions in Kampenhout, central Belgium.

Belgium exports about a third of the 110 million tonnes of endives it grows each year. They brought in \$49 million of export earnings in 1987.

Heremans, who ships to markets as far afield as Japan and Australia, is among those who want to boost quality exports and make Belgian endives as well-known abroad as Brussels sprouts.

He sees sophisticated, affluent North Americans as the biggest potential target. They currently take some nine per cent of exports.

Cosmopolitan

"We're aiming for cosmopolitan, diet-conscious consumers. And it looks good in high-fashion

nouvelle cuisine too. New York's our best market," he said.

Belgium's endive industry was thrilled when the esoteric vegetable briefly became an issue in the U.S. presidential campaign last summer.

Democratic contender Michael Dukakis suggested hard-up mid-west farmers could try growing something more profitable — such as endives.

Dan Quayle, Republican vice-presidential candidate, held up an endive for the cameras as he mocked the idea.

"That was fantastic publicity. Our U.S. agent got hundreds of calls from buyers wanting to know where they could get endives," Heremans said. The industry is determined to turn inquiries into steady sales.

"The Belgians just planted these in millions of minds" is the endive marketing board's slogan to the U.S. trade.

"They're very versatile and absorb the flavour of whatever you cook them with," said Brussels chef Pierre Brack at his restaurant, Astrid Chez Pierrot. His specialties in a 60-year career have always included game braised with endives.

Romantic origins

The endive comes from the same plant as chicory, the root roasted and used as a coffee substitute. Heremans says its romantic European origins provide good advertising copy to help capture a market hungry for novelty.

No-one knows who discovered that its crisp, pearly-white leaves were edible, too, but the best story tells of a brabrant farmer who fled in the turmoil of revolution in 1830.

He had been keeping some

chicory roots in his cellar for fodder, and covered them with soil before fleeing.

Today, traditionally-grown endives are still produced in much the same way. Big producers have their endive beds in sheds, rather than in fields under corrugated iron covers.

U.S. newspapers intrigued by an exotic new delicacy for chic dinner parties have particularly liked the idea of something yuppies can eat without feeling guilty. Endives are high-fibre, low-sodium and only have one calorie per leaf.

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Anxiety and more anxiety

By Anne Senior

Reuter

NEW YORK — If a pile of unread newspapers gives you a guilty pang and an overflowing in-tray brings on a panic attack, help may be at hand.

Author Richard Saul Wurman has come up with a treatment for "information anxiety," described as a stress syndrome resulting from a surfeit of data.

Wurman, designer of easy-to-use telephone directories and travel guides, suggests how to cope with the 20th century scourge of data overload in his new book, "information anxiety."

Many of us display symptoms of the malady, he says. We feel guilty about not reading enough, are too ashamed to admit ignorance of the stock market or the Middle East situation, remember little and understand even less of what we read.

Wurman, 53, said in an interview with Reuters that his book is a response to the growing burden of keeping up to date with developments at work and in the world.

He says pressure to be informed can lead to obsessive but ineffective reading, feelings of

inadequacy, and an inability to admit what we don't know.

He suggests a "low-fat information diet" — an individually designed programme whereby the maximum data may be digested with minimum effort.

The business world has shown a particular interest in the book because it appeals to managers desperate to cut a swathe through the data on their desks, Wurman said.

John Sculley, chairman of Apple computer, called the book: "the most important tool for understanding information in years."

Compulsive disorders

Stephanie Kravec, a psychotherapist specialising in compulsive disorders, said she had come across a number of people with problems similar to those described by Wurman.

"Students, business people, brokers — anyone in a competitive environment where data is important is at risk," said Kravec, who is a consultant to the post-graduate centre for mental health in New York.

Wurman's talent for data-sorting, which has earned him the nicknames "data doctor" and "clutter buster," has also turned

him from an aspiring architect into a successful entrepreneur.

His has an information organisation firm, the understanding business, which produces directories and maps, and a guidebook publishing company, Access press.

He has redesigned the California yellow pages directory and is now preparing to unveil a guide to understanding the Wall Street Journal.

Wurman describes his new book as a guide for disoriented victims of the "information explosion" — the proliferation of data products and services seen this century.

"I would call it the dis-information explosion," Wurman said. "Data is not information — the root of the word is 'inform' and a lot of this stuff just doesn't inform."

He writes that the New York Times contains more information in one edition than a person in the 17th century was likely to encounter in a lifetime.

In the United States alone there are more than 1,000 television stations and 10,000 radio stations, according to figures from the National Association of Broadcasters.

But instead of making us more

knowledgeable than our forebears, the data deluge has dulled our ability to take in what we read, shortened concentration spans and made us more aware of what we don't know, Wurman says.

He writes that a chronic fear of being uninformed produces a condition similar to the eating disorder bulimia — in which eating binges are followed by self-induced vomiting.

An "information bulimia" sufferer has attacks of subscription mania, when publications pile up at home or in the office, inducing guilt and then a period of data purging.

One remedy suggested in the book is a strict information diet — one leading daily newspaper, to be taken regularly, plus one news magazine and one culture publication. For professional needs, the book offers guidance on how to work out a leaner specialist diet.

Media specialist Peter Clarke welcomed the book.

"This is one of the few good efforts to address the problem of turning data into information," said Clarke, Dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Southern California.

Independent oil producers agree to help support OPEC prices

LONDON (AP) — Several independent oil producing countries said Tuesday they would cut or freeze oil exports during the second quarter to help OPEC support world oil prices.

The non-OPEC group, after a daylong meeting in London, released a statement saying more information was forthcoming but did not disclose details of the agreement or say which countries would participate.

"Specific announcements with respect to the above decisions will be made by the respective authorities in the course of next week," the group said in a statement.

Participating in the talks at the Mexican embassy were Mexico, Oman, Malaysia, Egypt, China, and Angola, the communiqué said. Also attending were observers from the Soviet Union, Colombia, North Yemen, Norway, Alaska and the Canadian province of Alberta, it said.

Oil analysts said the agreement would help bolster oil prices in

the short-term. But they added that such cuts would have little impact on the buoyant supply and weak demand in the oil market.

There was little immediate reaction in the London oil market. After the communiqué was released, the spot price of North Sea Brent blend, the most widely traded international crude oil, was \$16.30 a barrel, up 10 cents from late Monday.

On the New York Mercantile Exchange, the March contract for West Texas Intermediate, the benchmark grade of U.S. crude, fell by about 15 cents following the announcement.

Analysts said the lack of details about the agreement pressured the market.

The agreement "is fairly significant," said Philip Morgan, an oil analyst with the London in-

vestment firm Citicorp Scrimgeour Vickers. "I think it means the extension of the oil producers' group, even if the countries don't want to commit themselves to OPEC at this stage."

It also was significant that the independent producers were acting unilaterally, analysts said. They were doing so because the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) has managed to curb its production, they said.

Last year, independent oil producers offered to cut their output by five per cent, if OPEC agreed to reciprocal cuts. OPEC refused.

Some OPEC members have expressed resentment that independent producers enjoy the benefits of the group's production limits without making a contribution.

OPEC's 13 members are estimated to be producing about 19.5 million barrels a day, one million barrels above their agreed production limit but well below their

fourth-quarter production. OPEC has set a target price of \$18 a barrel.

"The psychological impact (on the oil markets) will be quite strong," Morgan said. But, "I think the total volume of the cuts makes little difference to the whole supply and demand question."

James Henderson, an analyst at Barclays De Zoete Wedd Ltd. in London, said, "basically, we see it as fairly positive for the oil price short-term. Basically, it will help OPEC through the seasonal demand downturn in the second quarter. We still see a dip in the oil price but not as dramatically as it would have been."

Henderson predicted oil prices would fall to \$14.50 to \$15 a barrel in March and April.

The analyst said he expects the independent producers to cut exports by between 200,000 and 300,000 barrels a day, but that "isn't going to have a dramatic effect on the supply and demand balance."

'Markets expected tougher talk'

U.S. central bank to continue interest rate hike against inflation

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Federal Reserve (Fed) Chairman Alan Greenspan said Tuesday the central bank will keep up its inflation-fighting efforts by pushing interest rates higher to combat what he called a troubling acceleration in price pressures.

Greenspan, in his semiannual report to Congress on monetary policy, said the Fed expects "to support continued economic expansion while putting in place conditions for a gradual easing in the rate of inflation over time."

He added, however: "Let me stress that the current rate of inflation, let alone an increase, is not acceptable, and our policies are designed to reduce inflation in coming years."

Analysts said that while Greenspan's testimony before the Senate Banking Committee demonstrated a commitment to fight inflation, financial markets had hoped for something stronger.

"It's matter of tone, but the markets would have preferred a little more anti-inflation vigour," said economist David Wyss of Data Resources Inc. in Lexington, Massachusetts.

Added economist David Jones of Aubrey G. Langston and Co. in New York, "in view of the new and disturbing evidence on inflation, ... the markets were expecting some even tougher talk from the Fed chairman."

"There's a general perception that maybe the Fed is falling a bit behind the inflation curve," Jones said.

Since last March, the Fed has been nudging up interest rates, trying to slow economic growth and avoid a flare-up of inflation. Those efforts intensified last

week after a report on prices at the wholesale level showed a one per cent increase during the month of January, equivalent to a compounded annual inflation rate of 12.7 per cent.

Prices at the consumer level in 1988 increased by 4.4 per cent, the same pace as during the previous year and a rate that Greenspan considers worrisome.

"With the economy running close to its potential, the risks seem to be on the side of a further strengthening of price pressures," the Fed chairman said. "In these circumstances, the Federal Reserve remains more inclined to act in the direction of restraint than toward stimulus."

Unprecedented combination

Greenspan said the Fed's task of charting monetary policy has been made more difficult by the unprecedented combination of an aging economic recovery, financial failures in the savings and loan industry, rising levels of corporate debt and the large trade and budget deficits.

"We have never confronted a situation that is exactly comparable to what we are in at this particular stage," he said.

Greenspan said the problems are so large "that is very significantly skews policy toward reducing the budget deficit and making certain that inflation does not accelerate."

"It's clear to me that much of the problems that we are confronted with could be assisted in an extremely positive way by a very expeditious and significant cut in the deficit," he said. "I am not one of those who believes that the process of cutting the deficit can be overdone."

Congressional leaders met with President George Bush Tuesday to discuss budget and deficit-

reduction plans, but legislators still were hoping the administration would provide more details on where it believes spending can be reduced.

Greenspan said he remained optimistic that an agreement could be reached.

"We cannot take the risk of not resolving it," he said. "The degree of risk of allowing this whole process to fester is unacceptable."

Bush in recent weeks has voiced fear that the Fed would overreact to concerns about inflation, saying he saw no need for the central bank to push interest rates higher.

The Fed has been pushing up short-term interest rates by a behind-the-scenes process that siphons off available bank reserves. This tightening of the money supply drives up the cost of that money — interest rates.

But while the Fed nevertheless has continued to push up interest rates, Greenspan in his testimony played down his differences with the Bush administration, particularly on assumptions for future economic growth.

The Fed expects the economy, as measured by the gross national product, to expand 2.5 per cent to three per cent in 1989. The administration, meanwhile, forecasts growth of 3.5 per cent this year and is counting on short-term interest rates to gradually decline.

The banking committee chairman, Senator Donald Riegle, called the administration's rosy outlook "startling" and questioned whether it was realistic. But Greenspan said the Bush forecast was "reasonable" considering the administration's deficit-reduction and budget plans.

Greenspan also refused to criticize the administration's proposal

to reduce the capital gains tax as a way to stimulate investment and generate more revenue.

Greenspan said that the Treasury Department's revenue projections are "credible" and that he would like to see the capital gains tax rate lowered so long as the reduction is not accompanied by tax increases elsewhere.

Consumer prices rise 0.6 per cent in January

Meanwhile, U.S. consumer prices started the year with a sharp 0.6 per cent rise in January, the largest monthly gain in two years and twice as high as December's increase, the Labour Department said Wednesday.

The January increase in the consumer price index (CPI), the most widely used measure of inflation, was driven mostly by petrol, tobacco and certain food items, especially meats, poultry and eggs.

The January increase, which was higher than most Wall Street economists had expected, was the highest since January 1987, when the index jumped 0.7 per cent. In December, it rose 0.3 per cent.

Economists expect inflation to pick up in 1989. They also expect the Fed to react to mounting inflationary pressure by hiking interest rates.

New inflationary pressure this year is likely to come from energy costs, which were stable last year, in addition to existing upward price pressure in services, wages and imports, they said.

Much of the reason for the higher core inflation rate was a 4.8 per cent increase in the cost of services, including medical, transportation and shelter, which accounts for more than half of the CPI and reflects growing pressure by workers for higher wages, economists said.

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ECONOMIC NEWS BRIEFS

Sudan, Libya establish joint bank

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan and Libya have established a joint bank with a \$50 million capital, the official Sudan News Agency (SUNA) reported Tuesday. It said the agreement was signed Monday by Sudanese Finance Minister Omar Nour Al Dayem and Libyan envoy Jaglou Al Sanousi. The bank will have its headquarters in Khartoum. SUNA said Sudan would pay the equivalent of its \$25 million share of the capital in local currency because of its acute shortage of foreign currency. It did not say when the bank would start operating or specify the services it would offer.

Iraq reports higher energy activities

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraqi oil production increased by nearly 20 per cent last year and its oil exports rose by 15.3 per cent, Oil Minister Issam Abdul Rahim Al Chalabi was quoted as saying. Baghdad newspapers quoted him saying that also gas exports increased by 55.2 per cent last year and Iraq's oil refineries increased their capacity in the same period by eight per cent. He gave no estimate for total oil production which he said had risen by 19.3 per cent last year. In December, four months after a ceasefire ended the Iran-Iraq war, Chalabi said that Iraq was producing 2.75 million barrels of oil per day. Speaking to mark the anniversary of a reform drive, he added that 30 oil enterprises were abolished or amalgamated and the number of employees in the oil industry was cut from 74,000 to 53,000 in 1988.

African debt may rise to \$300b in '90

ADDIS ABABA (R) — Africa's external debt could rise to \$300 billion next year from \$230 billion now unless quick action was taken to contain it, the head of the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa said Tuesday. Adebayo Adedeji, the commission's executive secretary, said at a meeting of African foreign ministers that African governments needed more international support for their economic recovery programmes. "Africa must also find ways of stopping flows of resources to the industrialised countries and find solutions for debt servicing problems so as to use the resources for development," he noted. A panel of experts has already recommended to the OAU foreign ministers that debt repayments should be linked to increased aid and credit flows from the industrialised nations. Adedeji said the structural adjustment programmes advocated by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank had produced "no sustained results." He urged African states to devise their own development programmes focusing on "domestic markets and factor inputs" to promote medium- and long-term growth.

Yugoslavia hikes petrol prices by 35%

BELGRADE (R) — Yugoslavia, struggling with annual inflation running at 300 per cent, boosted petrol prices by almost 35 per cent Wednesday, Tanjug news agency reported. It said the increase, which pushed 86-octane petrol to 2.870 dinars (45 cents) a litre and 98-octane to 3.130 dinars (49 cents), was necessary in order to adjust domestic prices to import prices paid in dollars.

Europeans want single air control

BRUSSELS (R) — Western Europe's scheduled airlines launched a campaign Tuesday for a single air traffic control system to ease congestion and halt worsening delays for passengers. The 21 members of European Airlines (AEA) will fund a study to prove that a pan-European system would be more efficient than the present "patchwork" of national systems, the association's secretary-general, Karl-Heinz Neumeister, said. "Many deficiencies would not exist if we had one air traffic control system," he told a news conference. "The United States has one system in an area which is nearly double the size of Europe." West European air traffic is managed by more than 20 national systems which liaise with each other by telephone. An attempt to set up a supranational system under a body called Eurocontrol failed when some states refused to relinquish control over their air space. But Neumeister said the AEA would appeal to the 12-nation European Community, which has a common air transport policy, to take the lead in reviving the idea of a single system.

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A representative of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service will be available on the following dates to answer questions and provide information on U.S. income tax filing:

Sunday, February 26:
8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Individual sessions at the American Center, 3rd Circle.
1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.: Individual sessions in the Consular Section, American Embassy.

Monday, February 27:
8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Individual sessions at the American Center, 3rd Circle.
7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.: Taxpayers' seminar at the American Center, 3rd Circle.

Tuesday, February 28:
8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Individual sessions at the American Center, 3rd Circle.
1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.: Individual sessions in the Consular Section, American Embassy.
For further information please call 644371 ext. 233.

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Panhandle to buy Texas Eastern

HOUSTON (R) — Natural gas pipeline operator Panhandle Eastern Corp said it had reached agreement to buy Texas Eastern Corp for \$3.2 billion, ending a protracted fight involving Coastal Corp. The \$53 a share agreement is a total of \$650 million more than Coastal, a diversified energy company, offered for Texas Eastern. Panhandle said it plans to continue a programme begun by Texas Eastern of divesting all its non-pipeline assets in order to concentrate on the gas transmission business. Proceeds will be used to repay debt incurred in the tender offer, it said. The merger pact, approved by Panhandle's board and by Texas Eastern's would make Texas Eastern a wholly-owned subsidiary of Panhandle Eastern. Robert Hunsucker, chairman of Panhandle Eastern, said of the acquisition: "Combining two of the natural gas transmission industry's premier companies creates a natural gas pipeline system of more than 44,000 kilometres capable of serving markets throughout the midwest and the northeast."

Nigeria to import more fuel

LAGOS (R) — Nigeria, hit by a refinery fire and loss of capacity at other installations, will import 840,000 tonnes of fuel this month and next, a senior Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) official said Tuesday. Michael Ajiboye, head of commercial services at the corporation's products marketing division, said imports, mainly of petrol, aviation fuel and diesel, would probably continue in April at a reduced level. Existing agreements for refining Nigerian crude oil abroad would cover most of the emergency needs, he said. Ajiboye said a portion of the imports would be covered by purchases from the spot oil products market, but this was unlikely to amount to more than 10 per cent of the total. Nigeria produces about 1.4 million barrels (b/d) a day of crude oil and usually sends around 40,000 b/d abroad for processing to supplement capacity at its own three refineries.

Bush welcomes foreign investments

WASHINGTON (AP) — President George Bush Tuesday welcomed Japanese and other foreign investment in the United States and said he would like to see other countries more receptive to American investors. At a news conference on the eve of his departure for Tokyo, Bush was asked what his response was to Americans who think Japanese holdings in the United States are too large. "I tell them that the Japanese are the third largest holder of investment in the United States, behind the U.K. and the Netherlands," he said. "I tell them that it is important, if we believe in open markets, that people be allowed to invest here, just as I'd like to see more openness for American investors in other countries." And, Bush added, "I tell them, don't get so concerned over foreign ownership that you undermine the securities markets in this country. We have horrendous deficits, and foreign capital joins domestic capital in financing those deficits." Bush said Americans have to do a better job of knocking down the barriers to U.S. exports overseas.

Greek garbage collectors begin strike

ATHENS — More than 6,000 municipal workers Wednesday began week-long strike that will stop garbage collection and leave parks without attendants. "If you don't find a solution... Greece will stink" went the cry from more than 5,000 demonstrators outside the interior ministry. The strike began with a march to press demands for a collective wage agreement and salary increases. The president of the Union of Municipal Workers, Dimitris Mihailopoulos, said the strike came after the Socialist government reneged on a promise to settle the dispute. "We are the people who, rain or snow."

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Wednesday, Feb. 22, 1989
Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell		
U.S. dollar	538.0	542.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	424.0 428.3
Pound Sterling	937.2	947.4	Dutch guilder	258.6 261.2
Deutschemark	291.8	295.0	Swedish crown	85.1 85.9
Swiss franc	342.6	346.2	Italian lire (for 100)	39.8 40.2
French franc	85.7	86.3	Belgian franc (for 100)	139.3 140.7

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1.7540/50	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1970/80	Canadian dollar	
	1.8398/8405	Deutschemark	
	2.0765/75	Dutch guilders	
	1.5690/5700	Swiss francs	
	38.56/61	Belgian francs	
	6.2700/50	French francs	
	1351/1352	Italian lire	
	126.65/75	Japanese yen	
	6.3070/3120	Swedish crowns	
	6.6950/7000	Norwegian crowns	
	7.1610/60	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	385.90/386.40	U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY — Stocks closed stronger and near the day's highs as the weaker local dollar continued to entice overseas and local buyers to the share market. The All Ordinaries index rose 11.5 points to 1,492.9.

TOKYO — The Nikkei index rose sharply to end near the day's high at a record close of 32,311.93, up 331.85 points. A higher yen encouraged already bullish investors.

HONG KONG — Share prices ended higher after a volatile day, encouraged by Tokyo's record close. The Hang Seng index rose 10.92 to 3,161.56.

SINGAPORE — The market closed higher as renewed buying interest and short-covering brought widespread gains in a day of active trading. The Straits Times industrial index rose 7.22 to 1,138.75.

BOMBAY — Share prices closed higher on scattered institutional buying after the market opened cautiously. In textiles, Century rose 10 rupees to 1,550.

FRANKFURT — Shares dropped to 1989 lows in active trading after a Bundesbank securities repurchase allocation fuelled fears that domestic interest rates would rise. The DAX index closed at 1,292.17, off 15.35.

ZURICH — Prices closed mixed with a firmer bias, but buying was selective amid market concern that domestic interest rates would rise further. The all-share Swiss index rose 1.1 to 988.8.

PARIS — Prices lost ground during nervous afternoon business, undermined by revived worries about higher interest rates worldwide.

LONDON — Shares quickly fell to new lows for the day in afternoon business, reflecting a 30-point fall on Wall Street after a higher than expected rise in the U.S. consumer price index in January. At 1559 GMT the FTSE 100 index was down 23.8 at 2,097.2.

NEW YORK — Stocks stayed sharply lower in mid-morning but were off their lows following release of the price data. The Dow was down 24 at 2,302.



Protests sweep Kosovo province

BELGRADE (R) — Striking ethnic Albanian zinc miners spent Tuesday night below ground as a wave of protests against Serbian-imposed leaders and constitutional changes swept Yugoslavia's Kosovo province.

Official sources said Wednesday, the second day of work stoppages, that about 1,000 miners at the Trepcja zinc mine, 180 kilometres south of Belgrade, were demanding the dismissal of local Communist Party chief Rahman Morina whom they regard as a Serbian appointee.

They also objected to changes to the constitution of Serbia, Yugoslavia's biggest republic of which Kosovo is part, which would mean republican control of the province's police, defence and judiciary.

A Serbian parliamentary commission was expected to approve the measures Wednesday. They will then be sent for approval to provincial assemblies in Kosovo and Serbia's other province, Vojvodina.

The news agency Tanjug said ethnic Albanian intellectuals Wednesday appealed to the Serbian parliament not to approve the changes, saying Kosovo's existing constitutional position had "a real emotional value for the

Albanian population."

Witnesses said sit-ins and stoppages had spread among ethnic Albanian workers in most of Kosovo's factories and some university students boycotted classes.

Tanjug said some protesters demanded the dismissal of Serbian Communist Party chief Slobodan Milosevic as well as the entire local party leadership in Kosovo.

Kosovo government and party leaders said the protests added to the already difficult political, security and economic conditions in the province.

Tension between Kosovo's 1.7 million Albanians and 200,000 Serbs and Montenegrins has risen since Milosevic launched a drive to return the provinces to direct Serbian control.

Millions of his supporters took to the streets last year and toppled leaders in Vojvodina and the republic of Montenegro and held mass rallies throughout Serbia and Kosovo.

Namibians weary of South Africa

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — A Namibian union leader said Wednesday that his compatriots remain deeply suspicious of South African intentions in Namibia despite an independence plan set to begin April 1.

"Namibians can smell their independence in the air," said Ben Ulenka, general secretary of the Mineworkers Union of Namibia. But he added, "given the past treachery of the (South African) apartheid regime, Namibians are very cautious and vigilant."

South Africa, which has ruled Namibia for 74 years, is to begin implementing a United Nations independence plan April 1 leading to elections in early November.

The South-West African People's Organisation (SWAPO), the guerrilla movement that has waged a war for independence since 1966, says the South African government is actively working against a SWAPO election victory and will attempt to destabilise the territory.

"Namibia's future is tied up with events in South Africa," said Ulenka, a SWAPO member. "If the apartheid regime is in power indefinitely there will be very little chance for peace and stability in Namibia."

Ulenka, who spent nine years in a South African prison for his guerrilla activities, spoke at a meeting sponsored by Tribute Magazine, a black-oriented monthly published in South Africa.

SWAPO is favoured to win the elections, but has not yet detailed its political and economic policies.

SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma has said the organisation favours a socialist economy, but says he foresees a mixed economy initially and does not intend to embark on widespread nationalisation immediately after independence.

The organisation has not made clear whether a SWAPO government would tolerate opposition parties, such as members of the current transitional government.

"We can never forget about those who have been working in close cooperation with the South Africans," said Ulenka. "Reconciliation does not mean condoning the crimes of apartheid, the crimes of collaboration with apartheid."

Mwiliama Kupuzo, a black Namibian who serves in the soon-to-be-disbanded interim parliament, said a SWAPO government will seek to create "a one-party state dedicated to socialism."

Indian opposition hits Bhopal decision

NEW DELHI (R) — India's opposition accused the government Wednesday of betraying the victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy by accepting \$470 million settlement from Union Carbide Corporation.

In a bitter debate in parliament, opposition leaders denounced last week's ruling by the supreme court as a surrender to the U.S.-based company.

Janata member Madhu Dandavate said the settlement was a callous disregard of the rights of victims of the 1984 tragedy in which 3,400 people died of a gas leak from a pesticides plant run by Union Carbide's Indian subsidiary.

He told the lower house the opposition would campaign to reverse the supreme court order.

In the upper house, Bharatiya Janata Party member Atal Bihari Vajpayee said Union Carbide officials had indicated to him that the company was prepared to pay \$670 million.

"I wonder how the come down came about, and there has been mystery and secrecy surrounding the settlement," said Vajpayee,

India's external affairs minister for two years from 1977.

Union Carbide accepted the award, which was far less than the \$3.3 billion the Indian government had claimed on behalf of the victims.

A group called the Association for Socio-Legal Literacy filed a petition in the supreme court urging it to raise the compensation to \$600 million.

It said the court should have given reasons for deciding the compensation and for absolving Union Carbide from liability for the tragedy.

"By not pinning the multinational down to accept the culpability, the Indian government has left the door open to such companies to persist in diluting their safety standards in the Third World," the petition said.

Opposition parties, newspapers and organisations representing more than half a million claimants have denounced the settlement. One opposition party has even demanded impeachment of the supreme court judges for acting beyond their powers.

Ali pursues quest for doctor's pardon

BELGRADE (R) — Former world heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali arrived in Belgrade Tuesday to seek a pardon for a Yugoslav doctor in the United States who faces 20 years jail for fraud if he returns to Yugoslavia.

The doctor, Rajko Medenica, 49, a specialist in cancer and blood diseases, was convicted in his absence by a Belgrade court in 1983 of embezzling millions of dollars of Yugoslav health insurance by returning inflated bills for Yugoslav patients he had treated at a Swiss clinic in Geneva.

Ali, who flew in with several U.S. diplomats, politicians and former patients, said Medenica had performed a miracle in treating him for Parkinson's disease.

The former boxer, who could barely talk a few years ago, was able to speak slowly, quietly, without much of a tremble, and he carried his own heavy travel bag unaided.

"I have told myself not to travel so much, but Medenica is such a great man that I just had to

come," he said.

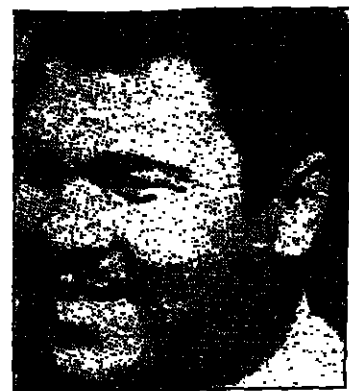
"I've got Parkinson's syndrome, and all the doctors of the world gave up, except Dr. Medenica. If it wasn't for him, I'd be much worse now. He's a warm and honest man," Ali said.

Ali was accompanied by John West, former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia and former governor of South Carolina, who said Medenica had saved his daughter from terminal throat cancer.

Also in the group were former U.S. ambassador to South Korea Richard Walker, who said he was successfully treated by Medenica for cancer, Colorado businessman Charles Stevinson and others who said Medenica had saved the lives of relatives.

West said the group would try to see Yugoslav President Raif Dizdarevic to plead for "executive clemency" for Medenica.

"We are not here to debate the claims of Yugoslav health organisations but to say on behalf of a great number of Dr. Medenica's patients that we don't want a stigma attached to this great



Muhammad Ali

medical genius," West said.

He said some of Medenica's patients were ready to compensate Yugoslav health authorities for financial losses.

Medenica has filed a request for clemency through his Belgrade lawyer in the hope that he can visit his ageing parents here.

The Medenica case was a major scandal when it broke here because the doctor had treated hundreds of top Yugoslav politicians including the late President Josip Broz Tito.

He also claims to have treated other world leaders, among them the Soviet Union's Leonid Brezhnev and the Shah of Iran.

Salvadorean rebels propose ceasefire followed by polls

OAXTEPEC, Mexico (AP) — El Salvador's leftist rebels have offered to lay down their weapons if the armed forces are sharply cut, the police force reorganised and next month's presidential elections postponed by at least four months.

The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front presented its revised proposal Tuesday on the second day of talks with delegates from 13 political parties seeking ways to end El Salvador's nine-year civil war.

Later Tuesday, party representatives agreed to continue discussion of the rebel plan. They also said they agreed to urge the government to engage in direct talks with the rebels in the presence of party representatives.

The front's offer attempted to address a major stumbling block in the talks — the constitutional requirement that President Jose Napoleon Duarte leave office by June 1 — by proposing an interim president.

The proposal appeared to be aimed at neutralising El Salvador's rightist-dominated military, which has warned publicly it might seize power in a coup if Duarte does not step down as scheduled.

The revised proposal came as guerrillas in El Salvador attacked the country's principal army base and an engineering detachment, leaving eight dead and 17 injured. The war has taken 70,000 lives.

most of them civilian.

Reports from San Salvador said the Rightist Republican Nationalist Alliance, ARENA, was standing firm against postponing the March 19 vote, which it is favoured to win, but deputy Chairman Jose Francisco Merino Lopez said the party would not tip its hand.

The ARENA and guerrilla representatives met for talks Tuesday morning but both groups refused to disclose details.

At an afternoon news conference, one ARENA delegate, Jose Francisco Guerrero, called the guerrilla attitude "sincere" but would not say whether the party favoured or rejected postponement of the election.

Dissidents' trial begins after Havel sentencing

PRAGUE (AP) — A trial against seven dissidents resumes Wednesday, a day after prominent human rights activist Vaclav Havel was given a nine-month prison sentence that sparked immediate protest in the West and in at least one Soviet bloc country.

Havel, a prominent playwright who co-founded the Charter 77 human rights movement, was found guilty on charges of inciting people to take part in a banned demonstration last month and obstructing police officers.

His arrest and detention since Jan. 16 had already caused unprecedented protest in Czechoslovakia and abroad.

But Judge Helena Hlavata found Havel guilty of indirect intention to incite people to attend a banned Jan. 15 demonstration and of refusing to obey the police officers' demands to leave a central Prague square the next day.

Havel instantly appealed the nine-month sentence, handed down by Hlavata after prosecutor Karel Florian had demanded at least one year's jail and a 25,000 crown (\$2,500) fine for the 52-year-old playwright.

Austria and the Netherlands immediately protested the sentence, while in neighbouring communist Hungary, the Pen Club of Writers sent a letter to the Czechoslovak Writers' Union expressing "serious anxiety."

The trial of seven dissidents on hooliganism charges that could jail them for up to two years opened in another court room Tuesday.

The charges stem from an attempt by the seven to lay flowers Jan. 16 on Wenceslas Square in memory of Czech student Jan Palach, who burned himself alive 20 years earlier to protest the Soviet-led 1968 invasion of his country.

Two reporters from Reuters

No peace in sight for strife-torn Kampuchea

By Joseph de Rienzo
Reuters

JAKARTA — A messy end to Kampuchean talks in Jakarta has left many fearing that peace is as far away as ever before for that troubled land.

Kampuchean as well as foreigners who have made careers studying the country as diplomats, scholars or journalists, wondered aloud during the course of the past week's Jakarta peace talks whether long-term peace was possible at all.

"Even if a United Nations peacekeeping force stayed for a couple of years, within a few years there would be a blood-bath," a Western diplomat said.

"It's a civilisation that, with some interruptions, has been in decline since the 1300s. We may be seeing a society that is no longer capable of nationhood," said the diplomat, who staunchly opposes Vietnam's troop presence there.

Some diplomats have warned there is a risk the tiny Asian country could end up as several small states.

Phnom Penh and the three guerrilla factions who hold Kampuchea's United Nations seat made no significant compromise at the Jakarta talks. Prince Norodom Sihanouk, championed by resistance backers as the man fit to unify Kampuchea, stayed away.

Southeast Asian states and the major powers have put

pressure on the warring parties to end war and political upheavals that have ripped the country since Sihanouk's ouster by a military coup in 1970.

But the talks ended here with only vague directions from the belligerents over when, where and how to resume the peace process, which has been spurred by the signs of Sino-Soviet normalisation.

The talks centred on the monitoring of a Vietnamese troop withdrawal and the end of foreign military aid to the guerrillas.

NEWS ANALYSIS

The Kampuchean factions are expected to have talks among themselves in the near future to discuss how to eventually share power and hold general elections before Jakarta peace talks resume in July.

"It looks like everything might go on hold until after the Sino-Soviet summit in May," a resistance delegate said. China had demanded Vietnam cease military and political involvement in Kampuchea as a condition for Peking mending ties with Moscow.

Soviet-backed Vietnam says it will pull out its troops backing the Phnom Penh government by September in return for an end to foreign military support to guerrillas.

It says its troops, numbered at 50,000 by Hanoi and up to 70,000 by Washington, will be out by December, 1990, no matter what because Phnom



Jan Palach

news agency and the Voice of America were the only Western correspondents allowed to attend nine hours of proceedings at that trial Tuesday.

They said the defendants all argued they came to the square to lay flowers, that no demonstration was intended and no hooliganism was involved.

Judge Antonin Tesik opened proceedings by warning spectators not to talk or laugh during the hearings, and later expelled the mother of one defendant, peace activist Ota Veverka, for smiling, the Western reporters said.

Penh's leaders, many of whom were installed by Hanoi after its 1978 invasion, will be able to protect themselves.

With Vietnam's help and frequent military intervention, Phnom Penh has built up its forces and population base over most of the country. However, its "people's war" strategy to defeat hardened insurgents is weakest in sparsely populated areas in mountains and near the long Thai border — traditional Khmer Rouge guerrilla strongholds.

"These negotiations were not for shares of power, they (the four factions) are fighting for survival," one diplomatic source said.

Said another: "The animosity between the two communist factions (Phnom Penh and the Khmer Rouge) runs deep. They are really going to kill each other."

Infighting is also endemic between the two small non-communist factions headed by Sihanouk and Son Sann, an ageing former premier.

Sihanouk's son and guerrilla chief Prince Norodom Ranariddh said here that only a U.N. peace force could effectively enforce an end to hostilities in Kampuchea.

It is widely feared that any Khmer Rouge return to power would mean a repeat of their brutal rule, which Western governments say resulted in the deaths of a fifth of the population when the party was headed by Pol Pot.

Deng hints at retirement soon

PEKING (R) — China's senior leader Deng Xiaoping hinted Wednesday that he was planning to retire soon and said Communist Party chief Zhao Ziyang and Premier Li Peng were already in charge of "important matters."

The 84-year-old leader, whose health is the subject of widespread speculation, added that his decade-old reform policies would not change.

"The ones handling important matters are Zhao Ziyang and Li Peng. I am old, I should retire early," Deng said during a meeting with visiting President Pierre Buyoya of Burundi in the Great Hall of the People.

"You are only 40 years old while I'm nearly 85," the official New China News Agency (NCNA) quoted Deng as telling Buyoya. "I'd like to make friends with a young man."

Deng, who stepped down from most key political posts in 1987 but continues to head the party's Central Military Commission, is still regarded as the most influential figure in the Chinese leadership.

Peking-based diplomats said Deng's retirement plans were believed to be the reason China had



Deng Xiaoping

pressed for the planned summit meeting with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to be held in May rather than later in the year.

The news agency quoted Deng as saying that problems he has spearheaded since the late 1970s but the main themes of modernisation, reform and opening to the outside world would not change.

"Definitely speaking, the road we have been following in the past decade is correct and we'll proceed along it steadfastly," it quoted him as saying.

Meningitis spreads in Ethiopia, kills 457

ADDIS ABABA (R) — An outbreak of meningitis that erupted in western Ethiopia last September has spread across the country, killing 457 people, aid and health workers said Wednesday.

They said a group of private aid organisations, United Nations officials and Ethiopia government representatives had recently estimated that nine million doses of vaccine were needed to contain the outbreak.

Meningitis, an infection of the brain's lining, can kill within days but is easily treatable with antibiotics.

The latest Ministry of Health statistics show 4,476 cases reported since September.

"The worrying thing now is that it has spread to virtually every corner of the country," said Dr. Amani Megeni, Ethiopian representative of the U.N. World Health Organisation.

Dr. Mandron Mahandrat, senior medical officer of the international charity Save the Children Fund, said: "The figures could be much higher because so many people live so far from any health centre... nobody really knows for sure."

He said meningitis was endemic in southern Ethiopia.

"It has been in this country for ages but there seems to be a cycle of a major outbreak every ten years," he said.

World population growing rapidly

UNITED NATIONS (R) — World population, growing faster than was predicted two years ago, will hit six billion soon and add another billion by the year 2010, a United Nations agency said Tuesday.

Another dozen years after that, population will reach eight billion, Nafis Sadik, head of the U.N. Population Fund, said in presenting a report to the population commission here.

A former Pakistan army physician, she said that the number would stabilise at 10 billion 100 years from now if current trends continued, but that effective controls could hold the line at eight billion.

Otherwise, at the end of the next century 14 billion people would be living off the planet's diminishing resources.

Sadik said that every developing country included population policies in economic planning but there still was inadequate political, financial and human resource commitment, weak support for programmes, lack of projections

and coordination and ineffective planning and monitoring.

At the international level, she faulted complacency about population and a lack of coherent planning because of a plethora of diverse policies on funding.

The former Reagan administration stopped United States aid for the U.N. fund, alleging that its resources were being used to encourage abortion in China. Sadik and her predecessor, the late Rafael Salas of the Philippines, both denied that any American cash was used for that purpose.

In her remarks to the U.N. commission, Sadik stressed the ill effects of rising populations on natural resources already heavily degraded by clear cutting of rain forests, topsoil erosion and diminishing ground water.

She called for an all-out effort to stem social, economic, environmental and personal degradation caused by an increasing imbalance between population growth and development prospects.

Help for breast cancer found

BOSTON (AP) — Four new studies show that chemotherapy and hormones can moderately improve the outlook for the 70,000 women in the United States diagnosed each year with early breast cancer, but experts disagree over whether every patient should get these powerful drugs.

Until recently, doctors believed that chemotherapy should be reserved for women whose breast cancer had spread to their lymph nodes. The new research suggests that many of those whose tumors are still confined to their breasts could also benefit from this treatment.

The studies found that women who got chemotherapy or hormonal therapy were somewhat more likely to remain free of cancer, but they did not live any longer than those who were treated with standard surgery and radiation.

About 70 per cent of women operated on for early breast cancer do well without any follow-up drug therapy. The newest results present physicians with a dilemma: Should they subject all patients to often-gruelling courses of drug therapy, even though only a small minority of them will benefit?

Several experts agreed that the decision to use the medicines

should be left up to the patient and not made by the physician alone.

"The mistake would be for doctors to automatically give the drug without explaining the unresolved issues about whether there will be a survival advantage and the possible long-term side effects," said Dr. Nicholas Robert of New England Medical Centre, a co-author of one of the studies.

Last May, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) sent letters to doctors recommending that all breast cancer patients get chemotherapy or hormone therapy. As evidence, it revealed the broad conclusions of three of the latest studies but gave few details.

"Many people didn't feel that the alert from the NCI was documented by enough evidence to justify it," said Dr. Merrill I. Feldman of University Hospital in Boston, another co-author. "It still doesn't justify putting all women on this, unless they fit the strict criteria of the women in these studies."

Details of three U.S. studies and one conducted in Europe are being published in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine.

"I think these four studies will have a significant impact on how people are taken care of," said Robert.

COLUMN

Queen shocks audience

LONDON (AP) — Midway through the play "A Question of Attribution," a sudden hush falls over the audience. The unthinkable, it seems, has happened: Queen Elizabeth II has walked on stage. In fact, her majesty is actress Prunella Scales. But given the public awe in which the queen is held, turning her into a stage character is a daring ploy, unprecedented in mainstream British theatre.

"A Question of Attribution," with "An Englishman Abroad," are two plays by Alan Bennett which, under the combined title "Single Spies," have been a sellout since opening Dec. 1 at the government-subsidised National Theatre. The show reopens Feb. 23 for a commercial run at, appropriately enough, the Queen's Theatre. The use of the queen as a character in any stage or screen performance is extremely rare in Britain, though the monarch appears as a grotesque puppet in "Spitting Image," a TV satire show. "It gives one an extraordinary sense of power on stage because of the way they (the audience) listen," says Scales, who captures the queen's diction, bearing and demeanor in her stage performance. It may take some special effort by Scales to accomplish this for her British audiences, given that the diminutive actress is best-known here as the long-suffering Sybil Fawcett, opposite John Cleese on television's madcap "Fawlty Towers" and as the conniving Miss Mapp in the comedy "Mapp and Lucia," based on the E.F. Benson novels.

A cure for stress victims

HELSINKI (R) — Finland's health officials are calling for government-organised sex holidays as a cure for citizens worn down by the stress of modern life. "People suffering from stress should be given the opportunity of having sex holidays when they would be able to forget their worries and concentrate on recuperating in an erotic atmosphere," according to a discussion paper produced by a Health Ministry working party. The idea will be considered next month by heads of Finland's state-financed National Health Service, a ministry spokesman said Wednesday.

"Lack of free time and various social obligations are the main impediments to a satisfying sex life," the paper argued. The experts also called for erotic books, magazines and art to be made more acceptable in Finnish society. They said products should be developed to create an erotic and sexually-stimulating atmosphere. But they said it would be up to each stress patient to provide his or her own sex partner.

Archive of useless research

CAMBRIDGE (R) — You may be wondering why life exists, or what is truth, or, perhaps, do we live on the inside of the Earth? The answers to those burning questions can be found in a unique collection at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) — the archive of useless research. The answers, however, tend to be far from the mainstream of orthodox scientific thought. The archive contains such little known works as Seabury Doane Brewer's "Discovery," published by him in 1931, that the Earth is only 965 kilometres from the sun, not the 150 million kilometres most astronomers assume. Brewer did admit in his essay, however, that "I have not yet had either the inclination, the opportunity or the time to prove" his mathematical calculation. The archive, known around the MIT campus as the "crank file," is full of books.

Sting works on saving Amazon

BRASILIA (AP) — Sting, the British rock star, has met President Jose Sarney to press a worldwide campaign to protect a large Indian reservation and for Amazon preservation projects. Sting, who is Brazilian for a week-long meeting among Brazilian Indians from 22 tribes and international ecologists, met with Sarney for hours Sunday then gave a news conference seated on grass before the presidential palace. "We would like to see Brazil create South America's largest Indian reservation and am sure we could make a lot of money in the United States and Europe for this project," Sting told reporters. He said he would help Brazil save the Amazon. Sting said, "The Brazilian government has made clear it accepts what it sees as foreign meddling in its affairs."